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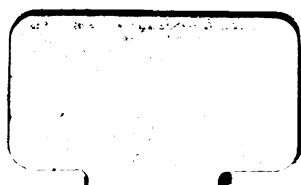
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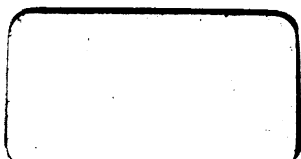
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THE SUNDAY GUEST.



VOLUME THIRD.

PUBLISHED BY PASTOR WENNER IN NEW YORK.

1881.

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(LUTHER, K.)



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Catharine von Bora, the Wife
of Martin Luther

...by
Armin Stein.
tr. from the German by
M. Drisler.

w.m.m.



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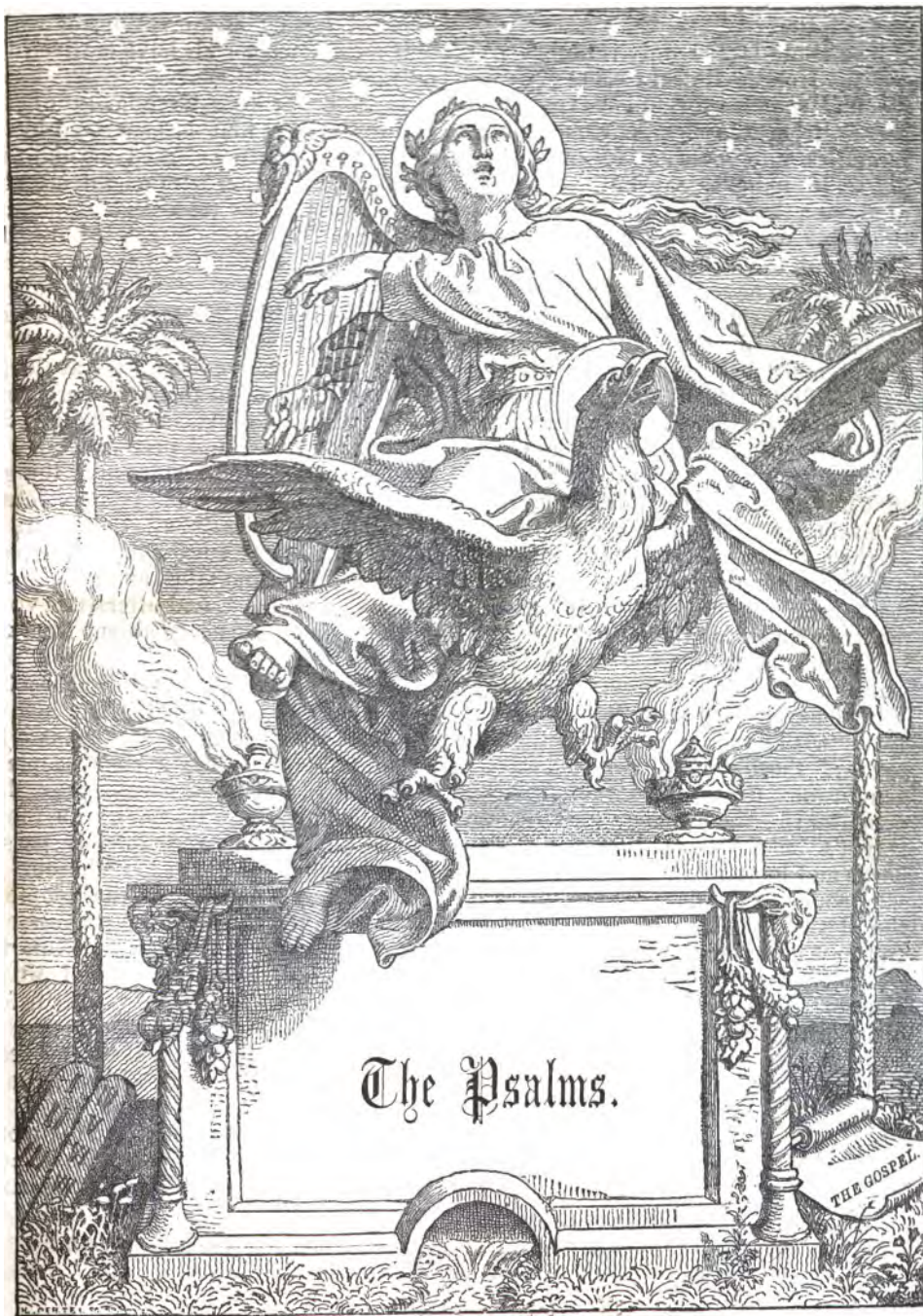
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THE SPIRIT OF THE PSALMS.

Poetry in all nations is older than prose, for feeling comes before reflection; and even if it did not, the impulse to express the former is more spontaneous and natural than to embody the results of the latter.

The Bible is the only relic left us of ancient Hebrew literature, but even in it we find snatches or fuller creations of poetry from the first entrance of the Israelites into Canaan till after their fall as an independent nation—a period of about a thousand years. The shepherd sings his earthly love or religious musings, and the hero his victories, to the sound of the harp.* Moses and Deborah triumph in lyric strains over the victories wrought by Jehovah for Israel; and David more briefly sings his triumph over Goliath. The simple wisdom of the nation clothes itself in rhythmical proverbs and sayings, the flowers of long observation and settled conviction. All that moved the people at large expressed itself in song. It heightened the joys of the sports of peace; it welcomed the warrior after the battle; it cheered the feast and the marriage; it raised a melodious wail for the dead.†

Youths and maidens strove with each other in learning strains they loved. The unmarried girls of Shiloh went out yearly with dancing and joy to the vineyards;‡ those of Gilead recited through generations the sad story of Jephtha's daughter;§ the young men learned David's lament over Jonathan;|| shepherds and hunters in their evening rest sang songs to the flute by the springs of the desert.¶ The discovery of a new outburst of water in the burning wastes was a matter for song and rejoicing.** The smith boasted in rhythm the fruit of his work.†† Riddles and wit amused

the social party.* The whole ancient history of Israel, as it lies before us in the historical books of Scripture, or reflects itself in the simple pictures of private life, reveals a wonderful richness of poetical feeling and creation, of which only minute memorials have outlived the natural losses of time.†

It is a striking peculiarity of the Hebrew poetry that has survived in the Bible, that it is penetrated beyond that of any other nation with an intense religious spirit. The transcendent spiritual heritage of the nation is ever the ultimate thought of the poet. He sees all things in their relation to Jehovah. Nature, the events of life, the secret story of his own heart, the hopes and fears of the nation, the course of things at large, alike raise his mind to the one creating, supporting, guiding, or avenging Supreme. A living and present God, who fills, surrounds, and inspires all things; by whom kings reign and princes decree justice; who rules in all the affairs of individual lives; who makes the grass grow on the mountains, and guides the stars like a flock, and utters His voice in the thunders, is never absent from the singer's thoughts.

In the book of Psalms this characteristic is especially marked. The history of the Psalter is that of all that is loftiest and noblest in the ancient people of God. No Old Testament book has handed down to Christianity an inheritance which has so completely passed into the spiritual life of the Church. It fills the hearts and lips of the people of God, age after age, with the prayers, and thanksgivings, and experience of the saints of old, from the days of Moses, nearly fifteen hundred years before Christ, till long after the return of the exiles under Cyrus, a thousand years later. It is at once of matchless richness and unequalled depth of contents. It embraces nature and history, the world around and that within us, the experiences of the individual and of the race.

* 1 Sam. xviii : 7; Judges xv : 16; Num. xxi : 27; Josh. x : 12.

† Isa. v : 12; Amos vi : 5; Judges xiv.; 2 Sam. iii : 33.

‡ Judges xxi : 19.

§ Judges xi : 40.

|| 2 Sam. i : 18.

¶ Judges v : 11.

** Num. xxi : 18.

†† Gen. iv : 23.

* Judges xiv : 12; 1 Kings 10.

† Ed. Reuss, Hebräische Poesie, 601.

S. H. P.

It runs through the whole sweep of human situations and emotions, from the darkness of midnight wrestling of spirit, to the height of the heavenliest joy.* It is no mere superficial or sentimental expression of moral or religious commonplaces: no mere melodious embodiment of external images. The singers, throughout, deal with the deepest experiences of the soul in its relation to God. The secret thoughts of the heart, respecting itself, common to all generations; the truest and most profound insight into the moral wants and shortcomings of our nature; the laments and prayers, the rejoicings and triumphs; the hopes and fears of the soul in the presence of God, are all bodied forth in simple words, or in symbols and images, so true and tender, that they have become a priceless possession for all time. Age after age pious souls draw ever-fresh draughts of the water of life from these wells of salvation. The fallen gain hope; the sorrowful, comfort; the young, counsels; the old, foretastes of the peace that passes understanding awaiting the righteous. There is no incident of life, no trial or temptation, no age or circumstance, that has not found in the Psalter some verse which comes to the spirit like a voice from heaven. 'By its manifoldness and applications in all ages, it is a vast palimpsest, written over and over again, illuminated, illustrated by every conceivable incident and emotion of men and of nations: battles, wanderings, dangers, escapes, death-beds, obsequies of many ages and countries, rise, or may rise, to our view as we read it.'† It is twelve times quoted in the Gospels. It was a Psalm the apostles sang together before they went out to Gethsemane; and the cry of our Lord on the cross, at the ninth hour, just before He died, was uttered in the words of a verse of the twenty-second Psalm.

Luther,‡ like many of the Fathers, specially praised and loved the Psalter. 'It may well,' says he, 'be called a little Bible, for all that is in the whole Bible

else is found there in the fairest and shortest words, prepared, as it were, as a precious hand-book. It seems to me, indeed, as if the Holy Ghost had pleased to take the pains to put together in it a small Bible, that he who could not read the larger one, might have the whole sum of it embraced in one small book.

'Other books of Scripture speak much of the works of the saints; but it is the noble merit of the Psalter, that it gives us their words, and there is no work of man nobler or more powerful than his speech. Nor does it give us only common utterances of the holy ones, but their choicest, as they spoke, with mighty earnestness, on the most sacred things, with God. And, indeed, God lays open before us in it not only their words and works, but their very heart, and the inmost treasures of their souls, to show us the source and spring of both words and works, and to let us look into their spirits, and see their very thoughts.

'For the human heart is like a ship in a wild storm, driven before the winds blowing from the four corners of the earth. But what is the Psalter, for the most part, but earnest utterances in such storms of every kind?

'Where can we find nobler words of joy than in the Psalms of praise and thanksgiving? You look there, into the heart of all saints, as into a fair pleasant garden, ay, as if into heaven itself, and see what sweet, precious, glad-some flowers, of all delightful, joyful thoughts of God and of His goodness, spring up in them.

'Or where can you find deeper, more sorrowful words of lament than in the penitential Psalms? You look there again into the hearts of the saints, as into death, ay, into very hell. How dark is every thing before the troubled vision of the wrath of God! When they speak of fear or of hope they use words compared to which no painter could image either hope or fear, or any Cicero describe them. What is best, they speak such words to God, and with Him, which gives their language a double earnestness. For when man speaks on such matters to man, his words do not go forth, in such a way, from the

* Delitzsch, *Die Psalmen*, 287.

† Dean Stanley's *Eastern Church*, lxxv.

‡ Vorrede über den Psalter.

very heart, or so burn, or live, or wrestle.'

His words are so beautiful that I must quote still another paragraph.

'Hence it comes that the Psalter is the book of all God's people; and that every one, in whatever case he be, finds psalms and words in it, which rhyme so with his own state, and seem as if so written for his special need, that he could not express it in words more fitting, or either find or wish words so apt.

'And, withal, it is besides a special good in this, that, when the words please and chime in with such an one's own thoughts and feelings, he is sure that he is in blessed fellowship with the saints, and that it has happened to him as to all these holy ones, because they all sing the same song as he. He can, for himself, speak the same words to God as they have spoken, and must have faith to do so, for they have no relish to ungodly souls.' CUNNINGHAM GEIKIE.

THE BURGOMASTER'S DAUGHTER.

It was a cold day, in the end of January, 1527, when a young man, not more than twenty years of age, was making his way through the snow towards a small town on the borders of Alsace. He had come from Nuremberg, performing, for the most part, the journey on foot. Curiosity had led him to visit Augsburg and Constance. From the latter town he had come down the Rhine in a barge as far as Schaffhausen, and he is now drawing near the end of what had been a long pilgrimage.

Franz Hiller—that was the young man's name—was a native of the town he was now coming to visit. Five years ago he had left it to pursue his fortune as an artist. After various wanderings and adventures, he settled at Nuremberg, as a disciple of Albrecht Dürer. When Franz left home he was too young to take much interest in the great religious questions that were at that time working a revolution in Germany. He attended mass regularly at the old church on the hill, and had no doubts about the truth of all that the priest had taught him. Religion, in fact, was not a thing about which he was to trouble his head. He had only to perform the prescribed duties, and the Church would take care of the rest. But at Nuremberg the whole town was affected by the new life of the Reformation. Dürer was an ardent Protestant, and all the intellect and zeal of the Nurembergers were on the side of Luther.

'Welcome, Franz,' said old Ritter,

the Burgomaster, as Franz Hiller entered his parlor, where he was seated with his family for the evening. 'We heard of your coming, and expected you earlier.'

'I should have been here sooner,' said Franz, 'but I came by Augsburg.'

Nothing was mentioned at this time of the object of his visit to Augsburg. The old Burgomaster was glad to see the son of his friend, Karl Hiller, who had died two years before, and the evening was spent in pleasant but sober hilarity.

Franz Hiller was to stay some weeks with the Burgomaster. He had come for a holiday, and Dürer had arranged to give him a few weeks' absence. Painting and sculpture were for a time forgotten. Hiller was so full of the Reformation that it absorbed his thoughts. During his first week he made a visit to Strasburg, where some of the Reformers had fled for an asylum. To the Burgomaster he did not even mention his thoughts on religion, for he found the old man a strict Roman Catholic, and with no forbearance towards those who had not implicit faith in the Church.

The Burgomaster had a large family. The eldest was named Luise. She was two years younger than Franz, and was a bright flaxen-haired maiden with the simplicity and innocence of one who had never been beyond her native town. Franz and she had been companions and children, and now that they had grown to man's and woman's estate, it was marvellous that they found pleasure

each other's company. When the weather was fine, they went for long rambles by the banks of the river or over the wide fields. At evening, in the house, Franz's eyes were seen frequently fixed on Luise's face, too frequently to escape the notice of the Burgomaster and his wife, while Luise sat working with her fingers, and only stealing an occasional glance at Franz. The parents were soon in counsel as to the probable issue, and the usual questions of character, prospects, and suitability were discussed. The Burgomaster thought it his duty to speak of the subject at once, which he did in his own practical, homely way, warning Franz of imprudence, and bidding him to think nothing of his daughter till he was established in the world, and had greater prosperity than he had as yet attained. Franz mentioned his prospects, and revealed that his success had been greater than anyone could have supposed, from his youth and the short time he had been away from home. The Burgomaster recommended delay, but after the lapse of a few days he gave his formal consent to the betrothal of his daughter.

Franz Hiller returned to Nuremberg, but before the summer had passed he was again at the Burgomaster's. He was now more than ever confirmed in his adherence to the doctrines of the Reformation. He had ceased to attend mass, regarding it as idolatry; and when there was no Reformed worship, he spent the Sunday in the study of the Scriptures. The Burgomaster soon noticed his conduct, and was unable to account for it.

'Franz,' he said to him one day, 'have you ceased to worship God?'

'By no means,' answered Franz; 'but I have become a Protestant, and worship Him with a simpler worship than that practiced in the Roman Catholic Church.'

The Burgomaster seemed to shudder with horror.

'Franz,' he exclaimed, 'have you forsaken the Catholic faith and become a heretic?'

'No,' he answered, 'I have not forsaken the true faith, which is that which ought to be called Catholic, though after

the way which men call heresy, worship I the God of my fathers.'

'The Catholic Church alone has the true faith,' said the Burgomaster, 'and outside of the Catholic Church there is no salvation.'

'What you call the Catholic Church,' said Franz, 'is a Church of many errors, and many superstitions.'

'Name one,' said the Burgomaster.

'I need not,' was the answer, 'go beyond the mass. Here is a pretended miracle of bread and wine converted into flesh and blood. Here is the pretence of an offering which propitiates for the sins of the quick and the dead. Christ's Supper was a sacrament, not a sacrifice; a memorial of what Christ has done for us, not a repetition of His work.'

'But such is and has been the faith of the Catholic Church,' said the Burgomaster.

'Impossible,' said Franz, 'for in the first days of the Christian religion the Catholic Church agreed with the Scriptures, and there we find no mention of a mass, no offering of Christ's sacrament as an atonement for sins.'

'You do not understand the Scriptures,' said the Burgomaster. 'It is the office of the Church to interpret them. We must follow the interpretation of the Church.'

'Has not God given us reason to understand His own word? That word tells us nothing of a Church to which we must look for the meaning of the Scriptures. It speaks to us directly, bids us understand and follow its instructions.'

The subject was often resumed during Franz's brief visit. The Burgomaster was much distressed, and Madame Ritter sat in silence, looking as if her heart would break. Franz returned to Nuremberg, and soon after received a letter from the Burgomaster, full of deep and tender feeling, but informing him that he must not again visit his daughter, for heresy was a crime which excluded men from the kingdom of heaven, and ought to exclude them from society on earth. The blow was terrible, but Franz bore it meekly. He remembered the words of Jesus, that those who do not sacrifice

all for Him, even the nearest friends, are not worthy of Him.

Two years passed. It happened that the Church of his native town was being repaired, and it was proposed to have a new altar-piece. But who was to be the artist? At once the thoughts of many minds reverted to Franz Hiller. He was their own townsman, he was a disciple of Albrecht Dürer, and his work was said almost to rival his master's. But Hiller was a Protestant! The objection, however, was not insuperable. A messenger was sent to Nuremberg, and Hiller at once accepted the proposal to be the artist of the new altar-piece. He set out on his journey with mingled feelings of hope and anxiety. How could he meet the Burgomaster, and what reception would he have from Luise? In both he found less change than he expected. Several Protestants had visited the Burgomaster, and he was more reconciled to their opinions. He had no thought of becoming a Protestant, but his charity was greater towards those who differed from him.

To the altar-piece Hiller devoted all the power of his genius. As a work of

art, it became the marvel of Alsace. The carved angels seemed to fly, and the Christ which formed the central figure seemed to speak. The ideal of perfect Wisdom, perfect Purity, and perfect Peace, was expressed in carved oak, and the whole picture seemed a silent hymn of praise and glory to God.

Luise had often been with Franz as he planned the great work. It was in fact inspired by her presence. He felt instinctively that it was the toil for which she was to be the guerdon. The Burgomaster again consented to the betrothal of his daughter. He could be no heretic that conceived a work of such transcendent beauty, and before that altar, the work of Protestant genius in a Roman Catholic Church, Franz Hiller and Luise Ritter plighted eternal troth. They set out for Nuremberg three weeks after their marriage. Luise soon shared in her husband's religious sentiments, and during the stormy period of the Reformation their house was a home for many of the Reformers—a home consecrated by piety and blessed with great prosperity.

(*Day of Rest.*)

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CATHARINE VON BORA,

The Wife of Martin Luther.

Translated from the German of Armin Stein, by M. Drieler.

CHAPTER I. — A SECRET LEAGUE.

The twilight was softly closing in, covering with its dusky veil the lovely darlings of the spring, snowdrops and violets, hyacinth and liverwort, lest night should bring to them some harm. It had been a bright, warm day in early March, quickening life in every creature, and still the sun, setting behind the blue hills, lingered, throwing far his rays of golden fire, across hill and valley, forest and meadow.

The long row of windows in the western wing of the convent of Nimptschen glowed beneath the sun's parting beams so that the face of the young nun, who stood looking out through the corner

window at the beautiful evening, was kindled into brightness, and the stars in her eyes glittered like diamonds as she gazed wistfully at the peasants who, with tools in hand and singing as they went, turned their steps homeward to the village, where the smoke rising from the chimneys gave promise of the evening meal, and the children danced and played their childish games on the young turf.

The nun was young, not more than four and twenty years of age, and of very pleasing appearance. One could hardly call her beautiful; the rather prominent cheek bones and somewhat blunt nose disturbed the regularity of the features, and the pallid complexion



Catharine von Bora.

AFTER A PAINTING BY LUCAS KRANACH.

made her seem older than she really was: yet there was something in this face that at once attracted sympathy. The clear thoughtful eyes and soft curves of the expressive mouth betrayed depth of soul and sensitive feeling, while the firm, rounded chin promised much character, and the high arched brow told of dignity and repose. There was in the whole form and in the graceful movements something noble, an expression of true womanhood.

The cell in which the nun stood was a small, dark room like any other cell, and yet the occupant, by a skilful disposition of the scanty furniture and a little tasteful decoration of the prayer-desk and the holy pictures on the wall, had contrived to divest it in a great measure of dreariness.

The Abbess often lingered in this cell, and more than once had said: "I can never understand, Sister Catharine, why it is so homelike here. How do you contrive to make your cell seem so comfortable that one is reluctant to depart?"

And now the sister was at the window and tears were in her eyes. Her looks dwelt sadly on the glory of the spring-tide as she stood lost in sorrowful musing, while at her feet lay a piece of rich purple velvet which had fallen from her hand when she rose to look out, and on the window sill was a tangled mass of white and yellow embroidery silk.

The sister roused herself at length from her musing and caught up hastily, and, as it were, in alarm, the piece of velvet from the floor. She seated herself again on the footstool and continued her task of embroidery. This was an altar cloth for the chapel on which were to be worked two palm branches with the words "Hail Mary!" above them. The words were finished, but the palm branches were as yet only traced out.

The delicate fingers of the nun moved wearily, and she was bending low over her work, for the daylight was fast failing her, when the heavy iron bound door opened jarringly and a young nun entered.

"What do I see, Sister Catharine?" she asked wonderingly. "So eager at your work? Have pity on your eyes.

But what—so much still to do! Alas! what will the Abbess say? The new cloth is needed for the altar at high mass to-morrow."

The nun thus addressed looked up with a troubled face: "I am striving with my own heart, which obeys so reluctantly the commands of our Superior. I can work but slowly, and what was once a pleasure, is now a grievous burden. O! what a change in my thoughts, Sister Elizabeth. Since the voice of that monk of Wittenberg has penetrated the walls of our convent, all is changed within me."

Sister Elizabeth looked anxiously towards the door and made a sign of silence. "Not so loud, Catharine, the walls have ears." She went to the door, bolted it, then drawing a stool close to Catharine, bent towards her: "Light a lamp, Sister; I will help you."

"That is kind, dear Elizabeth," answered Catharine with a grateful smile. "But not quite yet; it is the hour for vespers, and then comes supper." As she spoke the bell began to toll, and both nuns left the cell to take part in the service and afterwards to repair to the refectory for the evening meal.

Both were of noble family, for only maidens of noble birth were received at the convent of the Throne of Mary at Nimptschen, near Grimma. The younger was Elizabeth von Canitz, but 18 months a nun, whose fresh rosy color had not yet faded in the close air of the convent, nor had her high spirits succumbed to the oppression of the monotonous routine. Her gay and childlike bearing made her a general favorite, and even the formal old Abbess had been known to smile at her drolleries.

The elder nun came of the distinguished family von Bora, rich in ancestors but poor in worldly goods, which had its ancestral seat at Steinlaussig near Bitterfeld. She was an orphan, and knew that of all her brothers and sisters one only, a brother, John von Bora, was still living. Since her tenth year she had been in the convent, and in her fifteenth year she had taken the veil.

An hour later the two sisters were again in Catharine's cell. When they

had lighted the brass lamp, they sat down together and applied themselves to finish the work.

"How quickly your fingers move, dear Elizabeth!" said Catharine, "and how brightly you look at your work! Happy child! life is for you like a lovely day in May. You know nothing of inward strivings, of doubt and conflict; you are at rest within these dark walls and believe with childlike, unquestioning faith that these are the very gates of heaven. Once I was like you, happy and contented. It was hard indeed to leave my father's house, to part from all that was dear to the heart, to hear the gates of the convent close behind me like a coffin lid let fall, and henceforth to be dead to the world, to meet no more the kiss of love, the greeting of friendship—that cost a struggle. Yet, feeling that this must be, since the poverty of my parents did not allow them to choose another lot for me, I conquered my sorrow and with a steadfast spirit knocked at the gates which they assured me were the gates of heaven; and truly it seemed to me as if the airs of heaven breathed upon us in the convent. To be thus separated from all the temptations of the wicked world, released from all care of daily bread, freed from the fever of ambition, given wholly to labor for the safety of my soul and my eternal salvation, amidst the incense and holy songs of the temple, while spiritual counsel directed each step of the way, all this laid hold upon my heart and made it seem to me that I dwelt in the court of Heaven, so that daily I blessed my parents who had secured for me so blessed a lot. All that happy state is gone; this life seems far different to me now, and at times I feel as though I were buried alive. This gloomy house, which I regarded as the abode of true life, is a tomb. The monk of Wittenberg has opened my eyes to see that all that I looked on as pious observances are but idle forms. I am terrified at the words of Luther, but they have waked me from a dream; he is right, it was but a dream of righteousness. My heart tells me that he was right, for the peace which I sought in pious books and prayers I have failed to find. They told me that the

convent was the abode of true piety—I know now that is not true. I believe now that we can serve God as truly and lead as holy lives in the world as here—perhaps more holy. If one could but leave the evil heart behind in entering here! But no, that enters with us into the solitude and makes for us snares of which in the outside world we know nothing. It seems as though everything in the convent must help to raise the soul out of the dust and fill it with heavenly strength, and yet the very solitude deadens the spirit. In the outside world life glows with changing colors, here all is gray against a ground of gray. Without, men rejoice in the spring which arises fresh and green from the snows of winter, looking forward the while to the summer which will turn buds of spring to blossoms. Soon they hail with joy the autumn with its stores of ripened fruit, and thus prepare for the rest and quiet of the winter. But here in the convent we know not whether the violets are in bloom, or the grapes ripe, or if the snow covers the earth—all seasons and all days are alike—life is one dull gray, if one can call this life at all. Without, men go in the morning to their work, and work is to them a pleasure, a blessing for body and soul. At noontide, their meals have a relish for them and they look forward to the rest at evening. Here in the convent, life glides away in pious idleness, and the spirit is dried up within one. If only our convent were in some city that we might feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and visit and care for the sick and sorrowing. That would be something to fill up the emptiness of this existence, and would bring some life and change into this dull monotonous routine. Ah! Sister Elizabeth, my spirit can no longer endure the torment of this awakened strife! I feel but too clearly that my strength is failing, and my blood flows more and more slowly through my veins."

Her head drooped and rested on her hand. Elizabeth did not venture to break the silence, for the other's troubled face filled her tender heart with the deepest pity, and Catharine's words had

strongly moved her. Elizabeth had listened with glowing eyes and with constantly increasing interest. Several times she attempted to speak but found no words. Now, she sprang up hastily from the stool and seized Catharine's hand: "Sister, has God sent you to speak such words to me? The veil has fallen from my eyes also, and I see clearly what till now was hidden from me. You have spoken out boldly and clearly the thoughts that stirred vaguely in my soul like a presentiment. You call me happy, Catharine, and you are right, for God has given me a happy spirit; but I am not a child that believes without question the laws of the Church, and the rules of our order. Do you think that I only have not felt Luther's words? Since the day on which I read his thesis on monastic vows and on the Babylonish Captivity, I have had no rest from tormenting thoughts. I am not so clever as you are; I can not express so clearly what I feel; I was conscious only of an undefined trouble that struck its roots into my soul and would not let me rest. Now that you have spoken out plainly to me, I understand what I have felt, and know that I am unhappy like you," and thus speaking, she threw herself into Catharine's arms and wept aloud.

With some difficulty Catharine disengaged herself and wrung her hands, crying: "Alas! what have I done? Would that I had been silent and borne my sorrow alone."

Elizabeth dried her tears and passed her hand over the other's cheek. "Do not be troubled, dear Catharine. The awakening is painful, but is it not better to know one's self than to live and die in a delusion?" Catharine looked inquiringly at Elizabeth, then, stooping close to her ear, whispered: "Elizabeth, you do not yet know all my trouble."

The younger nun looked up anxiously as Catharine went on: "You will not betray me, Elizabeth? There are seven of us who have a secret."

"Trust me," answered Elizabeth, "I will be silent."

Catharine drew closer to her friend as she whispered, "You know what happened at Grimma?"

Elizabeth nodded. "I know that the gospel is preached there since Martin Luther first proclaimed it from the pulpit of the town church."

Catharine shook her head. "That is not what I mean. The latest word is that all the monks of the Franciscan Convent of the Holy Cross have quitted it in a body."

Elizabeth started up. "That is not possible."

Catharine went on quietly: "It is a wonderful time. All the earth is heaving with the throes of a new birth. Not at Grimma only, but at other places also, convent doors have opened at the sound of the Ephatha spoken by Luther—Sister Elizabeth, if our convent doors should open to-day would you go or stay?"

A glow awoke on the cheek of Elizabeth as she trembled and looked down, then, springing to her feet—"Sister!" she cried, "I believe that I would go! And yet," she continued, drooping again, "who could open the doors for us? You know how bitter the Abbess is against Luther and how often she reviles him."

A shade passed over Catharine's open brow and she sighed deeply. "That troubles me also. But perhaps the Abbess may do of constraint what she will never do of free will."

"I do not understand you," returned Elizabeth, anxiously.

Catharine bent down again to her friend with an air of mystery: "Listen, Elizabeth. There are eight sisters who have agreed to make known to their families the strait in which they are, declaring that they believe monastic vows to be contrary to God's word, and entreating help to escape from the convent, that they may no longer be constrained to the vain pursuit of an unreal holiness."

With widely opened eyes Elizabeth grasped her friend's arm, asking: "Who are these eight Sisters?"

Catharine answered: "Magdalen von Staupitz, Veronica and Margaret von Zeschau, Laneta von Gohlis, Eva von Gross, Eva and Margaret von Schönfeld; I am the eighth."

"Let me be the ninth!" exclaimed

Elizabeth. "If you depart I will not stay behind."

Catharine raised her hand warningly, looking steadily at Elizabeth: "We will gladly include you among us, but be on your guard, for yours is a heedless tongue and your face is as an open book."

Elizabeth colored high. "Have no fear, dear Catharine. You shall learn to know that when it is needful I too can keep silence and conceal my thoughts."

Both nuns now took up the work which they had dropped, and still discussing the same topic, sat working till the tolling of the midnight bell called them again to prayer.

CHAPTER II.—DISAPPOINTMENT.

Another beautiful day was drawing to a close and seven nuns were gathered in the cell of Magdalen von Staupitz. Besides the occupant were present the two sisters Eva and Margaret von Schönfeld, Veronica and Margaret von Zeschau, Eva von Gross and Catharine von Bora.

All were depressed, for their hopes, founded on the love and pity of their parents and friends, had been miserably disappointed. Magdalen von Staupitz had received a warm kind letter from her brother, the Vicar General of the Order of St. Augustine, and Catharine von Bora had read a truly loving letter from her brother John; but both had earnestly deprecated a departure from the convent. Monks might take such a step, for they could earn their daily bread; but what could helpless nuns do in the world? The second evil would be worse than the first. The two pairs of sisters and Eva von Gross had fared much worse. The answers which they had received from their parents were so full of reproaches and menaces that they were thoroughly cast down and could scarcely be consoled.

At this moment Laneta von Gohlis entered with drooping head and sorrowful eyes. Silently she sat down among the others, and now all eyes turned involuntarily to Magdalen von Staupitz whose riper judgment won the confidence of

all. It was she who had called them together to consult about what should now be done.

Magdalen rose from her seat, a woman of dignified presence with calm face and intelligent eyes: "Dear Sisters," she said in her full sweet tones, "our first hope is disappointed, and it must be bitter to us thus to be abandoned by our natural protectors whose blood flows in our veins. They require us to stay, but shall we obey men rather than God? God has called us through the word of his prophet, and the awakened conscience can no longer endure to remain in this place: for our obedience to the rules and observances of the order is only hypocrisy."

Catharine von Bora answered with trembling lips: "Indeed, my heart shrinks from the thought of ending my days here where we are scarcely alive; but what can we do?"

"Sister, Sister, hear my determination," continued Magdalen. "If the call of God has come to us through Luther, he is then the man to whom we must turn for help that he may lead us to the throne of God."

"Magdalen," cried Fräulein von Bora, in a tone of remonstrance, "how can you venture? A great man should not be troubled by the small and weak ones of the earth. Has he not greater and more important cares?"

Magdalen shook her head. "Do not seek to restrain me, Catharine. My brother has told me much about this monk of Wittenberg, and from what I have learned of him, we may confidently approach him. His noble soul does not ask what is great or what is small—he listens to and feels for the very least. Already he has assisted several monks who had left their convent, and through his energetic aid they have obtained employment in the world. Would he not much more take pity on helpless nuns?"

Eva von Schönfeld eagerly seized Magdalen's hand: "Sister, your advice is good, and a new hope dawns upon my soul. I am sure Luther will help us. I believe in him as in God."

There was a movement in the little circle—the name of Luther gave the

dejected Sisters new life and courage, and all surrounded Sister Magdalen thanking her for her happy thought.

"But how shall we make Luther aware of our distress?" asked Eva von Gross when the momentary excitement had a little subsided.

"That is not difficult," answered Magdalen. "Klaus, the gardener, will readily carry a message for me, as he has long wished for an opportunity to oblige me since I tended him when he was stung by a poisonous insect."

At this moment the door was suddenly thrown open, and Elizabeth von Canitz rushed in with pallid countenance and every sign of fear. "All is lost!" she cried, wringing her hands. "My father has come, and in presence of the Abbess has answered my letter with bitter reproaches and threats. Our secret is discovered, and I am the unhappy cause."

She sank upon a stool, burying her face in her hands and groaned aloud while the others stood around speechless and as though turned to stone.

"Magdalen von Staupitz was the first to recover herself. "Sisters," said she earnestly, "do not lose heart. They will attempt to break up our league and to punish us. We must use these few minutes to pledge ourselves not to be shaken in our resolution. Luther is our only hope. Leave it to me to communicate with him."

The nuns had scarcely time to agree to this when shuffling steps were heard in the passage, and the next moment the dreaded form of the Abbess stood before the trembling sisters.

Her usually pale face had a greenish hue which was the sign of the utmost excitement, and her chin almost met her nose, while her whole body trembled with the effort to control herself sufficiently to give vent in words to her anger. For a few moments no sound came from her toothless mouth, while the nuns stood before her in anxious silence, their hands crossed on their breasts and their heads bowed like criminals who await sentence. At length came these broken words:

"Oh—that my old eyes should see—such shame! Children of Satan!—what

have you done? Were you—Magdalens—or murderers—with bloody hands.—I could pity and forgive—but—your crime—my soul revolts. The sharpest rod is far—too soft. But yesterday—with joy and pride—I said—to the Provincial of our Order—See—the Convent of the Throne of Mary is unprofaned—by heresy.—Alas! I—am a liar and my pride—is humbled—my glory—turned to shame! Holy Mother, hide thy face—punish not thy whole house—for the sin of these nine! But these daring ones—forgetful of duty and honor—they shall atone—by penance—that the stain may be blotted—from our sanctuary!... But you! and you! and you! standing still? To your knees! in the dust!"

The nuns kneeled to the Abbess in silence, and kissed the withered hands that smote as thanks for the punishment, for so had the Abbess taught them, to accept correction as a benefit.

In the refectory that evening nine places were vacant, and also on the two following days. The penitents were confined to their cells with only bread and water, and in her pious zeal the Abbess did not hesitate to listen at the door, to ascertain if the Sisters faithfully repeated the enjoined prayers.

On the fourth day the prisoners were released, but only to deep humiliation. During mass, which was said in the chapel, they were seated apart, and when the priest began the Litany of Repentance, they were obliged, striking their breasts with their hands, to approach the altar on their knees, and thus remain until the holy water, cleansing from sin, and incense had dissipated the odor of heresy. The Abbess, whose feet they must kiss, then pronounced the form which received the repentant again into the number of God's children. But only the lips spoke the prescribed words—from the eyes gleamed unappeased anger, shared by the other sisters, who often made the convent purgatory for the poor heretics. No one deigned to look at or speak to them; often they were treated as though they were not present, or had forfeited the right to be in that holy place. They lived as if under a ban, and their sore need taught them not to

depend on prayers learned by rote, but to approach with full heart the throne of mercy and wrestle in prayer, like Jacob.

.....

"Where is Klaus?" asked the Abbess one day when walking in the garden,

addressing the lay brother who was digging up the vegetable beds.

The man answered slowly: "He is gone to buy seed."

"Where?"

"He did not tell me. To Erfurt, I think."

(To be continued.)

A STORY OF THE THIRTY YEARS' WAR.

It was in the days of the great Thirty Years' War, during which blood was shed like water in Germany. Like fallings of the richest dew of heaven, the blood—most terrible as was its outpouring—nourished the roots of the Reformation. But many a family in the long, fierce struggle was utterly shipwrecked; and went down in fortune and in name. This happened, at least temporarily, to the Friesbergs, whose castle crowned an eminence some twenty miles on the east of Prague.

It fell to the hard fate of this family to suffer on both sides. At the outbreak of the struggle, the old Count ranged himself as a partisan of the Emperor. Hotly he fought against the hated Lutherans. The Reformers, as all the world knows, displayed valour. When men are fighting for God and their own souls, it must be difficult to be cowards. And though, in the Count's district they were at length overpowered by numbers, it was not for the Lord of Friesberg to celebrate the victory in his halls as he had hoped to do. Early in that decisive engagement, and before the issue had declared itself in favour of the Imperialists, he was struck by a cannon shot and killed, together with his horse, instantly.

He had one young son, whom he had bred up to succeed him, not only in his title and estates, but also as the soldier of the Emperor and Pope. To the amazement of all his friends, this youthful noble, in less than six months after his father's death, avowed himself a Lutheran. Looked at from a worldly point of view, it was madness. The Reformers of that locality had been crushed on the victorious field where his father bled and died at their hands. Was that the mo-

ment to become a Protestant champion?

Of what use is it to ask such a question where the conscience is concerned? A man then does what he *must* do. If God wants a servant, He puts His hand upon him, and, in that case, the choice can no longer be said to be unlikely. Enough, that to Him who does the choosing the whole world is open for selection.

It came about, as many another conversion did in those days in Germany. A wounded Protestant had been brought from a far-off field to the castle. One of the Imperial officers commanding in the engagement had recognized in a foe a friend of his youth. In this instance—though it was not always so—the old boyish remembrances proved stronger than religious fanaticism or military rivalry. But the sympathy shown had to be hidden. The Lutheran soldier, who had received a very bad sword-thrust, was secretly conveyed to Friesberg castle, to die there instead of on the bare damp meadows where he got his hurt. Die he did, after lingering three days. But the picture of those days and nights of heroic suffering, and the holy resignation of the final hour, had a spectator. The young Count witnessed it. He had never before, amidst all its splendid pageants, seen beneath that castle roof so striking a spectacle. It was, he felt, impossible that the dying man could be wrong in holding religious views which enabled him to fight so valiantly, suffer so contentedly, die so triumphantly. The old Count, his father, had overthrown the Reformers six months before in a bloody field; one expiring Protestant was found sufficient to conquer the son.

The young noble enquired into the

disputed questions of faith. No long time passed before he was a professed Lutheran.

He was not the only one of the family who changed. He had an only sister, Dorothea, about eighteen months his junior. She followed his example. The Romanists in the neighbourhood were furious. All the old powerful household of the Friesbergs were slipping through their hands. It was on Dorothea that the keenest of the trials which succeeded fell. Her brother Bertram's place as a soldier was away in the field beside his new friends. Quitting the castle, with such of the retainers as would follow him, he went where the Reformers were still perilously maintaining their cause.

Immediately after his departure the Friesberg castle was attacked, and all but sacked as he well knew it would be. Dorothea was not bodily harmed, but she was subjected to insults and taunts. They, however, let her remain in the castle. She did not flinch from the practice of her newly-adopted faith. Resisting alike the threats and the blandishments of the priests, she worshipped according to the plainer and purer rites of the Protestants.

But before long another trial awaited her.

Lord Ludovig, owner of a domain only a couple of leagues away, announced to her—not proposed to her—that he would marry her. To Dorothea's dismay, a rescript was brought to her from the Emperor, bidding her to become Lord Ludovig's wife. What a prospect was now before her! The Baron was not only much older than she was, but he was a zealot on the Romanist side; and it was known by everybody, that no matter how much religion he professed, it was not enough practically to keep him from displaying the utmost violence of temper. A life of persecution was her only prospect. Flight was not possible. As if fearing that she would make the attempt, spies were set upon her movements.

She did contrive to send a messenger to her brother with the news. Her only hope was that he might manage to come, strengthened by some men-at-arms, and

rescue her, virtually a prisoner in her ancestral home. Day after day she climbed the narrow stairs leading to the battlements; there she sat, looking down into the deep valley.

The sun rose morning after morning in splendour; shone monotonously at noon down on the broad plain stretching to the right hand of the castle; and then, when evening came, sunk in gorgeous hues behind the distant mountains. No sign appeared of her brother Bertram's approach.

In the meantime Lord Ludovig intimated to Dorothea that the next Thursday was to see her his wife. The Emperor had promised to give him the castle and lands of the Friesbergs with her as her dowry. Already his servants had taken possession; the place was full of the bustle of preparation.

Punctually each morning Dorothea clomb the lofty stair-case. Still the valley showed no sign of help coming to her aid. Loosely hung her arms, the fingers scarcely retaining the handkerchief they held ready to wave as a signal that she was still in the castle.

The last day came. Dorothea's light foot was not the only one that ascended the turret: just before noon an armed heel rang on the stone-steps. Lord Ludovig appeared before her wearing some portions of his armour. Doffing his casque; and in so doing, revealing that his short locks had begun to grizzle from age, he said—

'Why do you come here unattended, giving your time to melancholy? You must banish these new-fangled notions of religion, and learn a merrier air. Evening will make you my bride. Learn to be a good Catholic, as I am.'

'I cannot, my lord, unlearn the truth,' was Dorothea's answer.

He looked at her in a puzzled way. 'What truth is, can only be settled by Rome.'

'Nay, but by God's Word rather, my lord, she firmly said.

'I did not come to argue points of faith,' he replied; 'but to tell you that attire befitting your position awaits you below. Silks and jewels will better suit the evening ceremony than that

plain dress,' pointing to the one she wore.

'Oh, spare me!' was her cry.

He had turned, and was already gone. Keenly, and ever more keenly, Dorothea's gaze searched the valley, for she never left her post, strange place as it was for a bride. The sun—almost, to her, it seemed for the last time—went down behind the far-off mountains, flaring in brighter colours even than usual. As the air soon began to darken into dusk, the bustle within the castle grew louder. Once her straining eyes led her to fancy she saw a glitter of steel among the trees at a curve in the valley; she almost imagined that she heard a puff of the wind bring the sharp sound of horses' hoofs from the same direction. But all passed by. Turning her head, she could just see between the towers lights beginning to gleam in the chapel below, showing, indistinctly, the tinted figures of saints and martyrs.

Again a heavy footstep sounded on the narrow staircase. This time she instinctively knew it was the Baron's, though it was no longer steel-shod. Lord Ludovig's aspect had anger in it; plainly, he was flushed with wine. It was in that way he had made ready for his marriage hour. He had been drinking to drown his conscience.

'I thought it better for my dignity and your own that I should come, not send.' He put forth his hand to take hers. 'Come, the priest is waiting.'

Dorothea fell upon her knees. She

wept; she besought him. It was in vain. 'I will not be befooled by a braincrazed Lutheran maiden,' was his only answer. 'Come with me.' His hand was touching her.

But, at that moment, help was near. Bertram's armour-clad form flashed in the dusk between them; two soldiers of his little party stood in the turret doorway. Before Baron Ludovig, in his intoxicated amazement, could persuade himself that this was real, Dorothea had vanished, followed through the stone doorway by her brother. The door closed on the Baron with a bang. Bertram took that precaution to give time to get down by the secret passage through which he and his men had entered.

Soon they were in the open air outside the walls. The danger, they knew, was not yet over; pursuit had to be escaped. But as they hastened to mount the horses, whose hoofs Dorothea had really heard, a strange confusion of shouting came from near the front gateway of the castle. Baron Ludovig, blinded by wine and fury, had taken a false step in hurrying to give an alarm, and plunged from the turret downwards, falling from the very spot where Dorothea had so long sat watching for the coming of her brother.

The fugitives were not pursued. Lady Dorothea afterwards married a Lutheran noble, though it was many years before her brother again saw his castle as its master. He helped the Protestant party not a little. JAMES S. MORGAN.

WHEN the German emperor, Frederick III., who had lived 78 years, and had reigned 54, and therefore had had much experience in the world, and had also learned it thoroughly, was asked in his old age, what was the best thing that could happen to man in this world? "A happy departure from this evil life."

"QUICK." The world of man, even the most pleasing, is a glittering fragment of glass. The word of God, even the most insignificant, is a grain of seed which only needs soil, in order to take root to spring up and produce fruit,

oftentimes after many years. The whole ear, which is afterwards produced, is contained in so small a seed.

LUTHER says: "One must not think the word preached in vain, or seek for another, if it does not produce fruit immediately. That which is sown is not immediately harvested. There must first pass over the field, wind, storm, hail, rain, thunder and lightning."

MAN, as thou believest, so thou livest; as thou livest, so thou diest; as thou diest, so thou departest; as thou departest, so thou remainest.



THE GOOD SAMARITAN.

Father Oberlin, the well-known pastor of Steinthal, was his whole life long a faithful servant and steward of his master. He was sometimes reproached by his friends for giving in charity beyond his means. At such times he liked to relate the following story from his own history: "When I was a candidate, I once went from Strassburg to the village of —, several miles distant. It was midwinter, and the road was rough. On the way, among the mountains, far away from every human habitation, I was taken with a faintness which I could not overcome. I sat down by the roadside and committed my soul to God, for I expected nothing else than that I should there meet my end. I fell asleep from exhaustion. But God did not will that this should be my last sleep. I awoke suddenly and found myself in the hands of a cartman with a blue blouse whose wagon stood before us.

With great difficulty he brought me to myself, refreshed me, and allowed me to ride in his wagon to the next village. There I thanked him heartily, and as he had to go further, while I had to remain till I got stronger, I offered a little present of money. He, however, indignantly refused it. For such a service, which one man owes another, he would take no money. "Well, at least tell me your name", I replied, "that I may pray for you." This also he refused to do and added "tell me, if you can, what was the name of the Good Samaritan?" I, of

course, was silent, for at that time I knew as little about it as I do now. "Well then, allow me also not to mention my name," and he started his horses and drove on. "In like manner," was Father Oberlin accustomed to conclude, "leave me in peace and do not blame my way of giving. Go ye and do likewise."

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3 Christ Song.

Vom Himmel kam der Engel-Schaar.

From heaven the angel-troop come near,
And to the shepherds plain appear :
A tender little child, they cry,
In a rough manger lies hard by.

In Bethlehem, David's town of old,
As Prophet Micah has foretold ;
'Tis the Lord Jesus Christ, I wis,
Who of you all the Saviour is.

And ye may well break out in mirth,
That God is one with you henceforth ;
For he is born your flesh and blood—
Your brother is the eternal Good.

He will nor can from you go hence ;
Set you in him your confidence.
Let many battle on you make,
Defy them—he can not forsake.

What can death do to you, or sin
The true God is to you come in.
Let hell and Satan raging go—
The Son of God's your comrade now.

At last you must approval win,
For you are one of God's own kin.
For this thank God, ever and aye,
Happy and patient all the day.

Martin Luther, 1483—1546. Translated by George MacDonald.

THE LIGHTED HOUSE OF WESENTHALL.

'I promised you, my friends,' said the Count Hans von Melchthal on Christmas Eve, as he seated himself by the great fire in the hall of the Erleuchtete, 'that you should hear why you are to-morrow evening to see a grand illumination of this place. In hearing this, you will hear the history of my life; and I shall be happy if that history do you good. All our lives have more or less of history in them; and if people could interchange their experience, I feel sure that the world might learn much, and perhaps become in some respects better than it is.'

'These histories would so often show that, in the long run, vice and sin bring their own punishment, and as men sow, even thus they reap, I feel assured men, if they attended to them, would not so often quarrel with the wages of Providence as they do.'

'I am now becoming an old man, and in the usual course of things the Countess ought to be getting old too; but she continues so fresh and bright, I cannot persuade myself that so many years have passed over our heads since we returned to live at Wesenthall. I ought, perhaps, to say, since we "came" to live, rather than since we "returned" to live; for I left Wesenthall when a mere boy, to find what home I best could in the world; and the Countess was never here, until she was thirty years of age, when Erleuchtete was lighted up for the first

time, as you will see it to-morrow night. The manner of my coming back was strange indeed; as you yourself will say, when you hear the story of my life.'

'This mansion was not always called the Erleuchtete; it was known by the name of Wesenthall. It belonged to my father and grandfather; and so back through many generations.'

'There was an old tradition in the family that, in times far back, one of the Counts had struck a dwarf with his iron-mailed hand; and then shut him up in a dark room at the back of the house, which was little better than an outhouse. There the dwarf shivered through that winter's Christmas night, and next morning was found stiff and cold upon the stone floor. The boy's offence was that he had been negligent in turning the spit; and some of the roast meat was spoiled.'

'The boy's mother followed him to the grave, and standing over it, she stretched out her hand to Wesenthall, and said, "May the curse of a murdered dwarf rest on yonder house each Christmas day; and may a shadow of darkness be over it, until on a Christmas day it be lighted up by a dwarf's hand; and then, but not till then, the curse shall be taken off."

'Perhaps the poor woman hoped that so unlikely an event would never happen, and so that the curse might remain upon Wesenthall forever.'

'But things come about in this world in strange ways; and to-morrow you will see Wesenthall one blaze of light.

'The saying of Frau Grumpe did not much trouble the old soldier who then inhabited Wesenthall. He shut up the room where the dwarf died; and if any bad chances did come, why he had already met many a one in the field, and elsewhere; and as he had survived others, so he would survive them. As to the room, it got the reputation of being haunted; as rooms under similar circumstances generally do; but being so remote from the general dwelling part of the house, nobody troubled much about that—least of all the old Count, who would as soon have given the dwarf's ghost a box in the ear with his mailed hand, as the dwarf himself; and who, if a ghost could be killed, would have had as little compunction in slaying him, as a man in common flesh and blood.

'The first Christmas after the dwarf's death, the Count's eldest son went out to skate upon the lake, which you passed coming to the house to-day. He was a young man of promise, and the joy of his father's heart; and was to be married in a few months. All went on well—there were torches flashing on the ice, and wine was being drunk there, and the sounds of laughter pealed all round, when suddenly there was a crash—a tender spot on the ice was reached, and the heir to Wesenthall was plunged into the water. In a quarter of an hour afterwards there was a dead silence over Wesenthall; and the body of a young man, stone dead, lay on the floor of this very hall.

'That was the first Christmas after the dwarf's death. But the old Count paid no heed—what had happened now had happened hundreds of times in the world here and there; and he would rather have lost every child he had, than have repented of his evil deed and expressed sorrow for his having killed the dwarf.

'But for all his outbraving of matters, people could not but see that the Count was not the same man he used to be; and when Christmas came round again, there was much whispering and wondering;

and no one knew what might take place. But the Count ordered all Christmas things as usual; and himself went out on the ice, and indeed he might be said to have spent his Christmas evening there. The servants did not know what their master was doing, but he was defying the dwarf's curse and the dwarf himself; and nothing in the world would have delighted him more than to have seen the humpback's ghost coming skating along upon the ice, that he might give it a similar blow to the one he had given its former body of flesh and blood; or still better, smash a hole in the ice and plunge it into the water, so that if ghosts could die, it might perish where his son had lost his life. But the ghost never came, and the ice never broke; and the Count came in again, so far comforted that a good part of Christmas night was over; and he had defied the ghost, and come off free.

'The wind had been rising during the evening; and as night came on, it grew stronger and stronger. The festivities of the servants were going on as usual, though the Count their master was sitting moodily by the fire, when a fearful crash was heard, which for a moment took away the breath of all. The eastern gable was down. It made a great gap in Wesenthall; but as soon as the Count had ascertained the extent of the mischief, he sat down again by the fire. If this were the doings of the hunchback's ghost, he had nothing to be proud of; it wasn't much to accomplish with the help of the wind, for the eastern gable was well known to be in an unsafe state—so much so that no one slept there; and the Count had a grim kind of satisfaction in thinking that either ghosts were great fools, or else they could not do as much mischief as they wished; otherwise why had not some of the sound part of the house been knocked down?

'Still, though he thus comforted himself, it was noticeable that the lord of Wesenthall became this year still more thoughtful than the last; and more thoughtful still, as the third Christmas drew on. But the third Christmas he never saw—at least he saw a part of it,

but did not see it. A fever set in upon him, it was believed from the worry of the mind, and it carried him off that Christmas night. But before he died he called his son, and warned him to leave Wesenthall every year before Christmas time came on; and even if he should live there during the rest of the year, to be absent then.

Carl von Melchthal followed his father's directions—he always left Wesenthall at Christmas time, and no harm came to him and his. Something or other generally happened, a horse died, or a tree was blown down, or some little thing of that kind, just enough to make people think that Jost Grumpe was about as usual; but no harm came to Carl, or any of his children. Wesenthall, however, remained in shadow—in darkness every Christmas; and so it continued throughout many generations. My own father always went to my mother's relatives at that time.

But, somehow, from the time of the one we always in the family call "the old Count," the property seemed never to thrive as it ought; and gradually, year after year, the house fell more and more into decay; until in my father's time it was almost a rookery, and it seemed as if it would never be lit up again.

Once a dwarf was born in the Melchthal family, and he was nursed as if he had been a prince; for it was thought that if there really was any curse upon the place, he might be the one sent to light up the old house, and take it off; but in spite of their care, he died, and Wesenthall became poorer and poorer.

My father was a good man, but he could not stop the family's decay. I was old enough to understand things when he died, and he used often to have me with him by the fireside, and talk to me. He told me all the history of the family, and what the hunchback was reported to have said. Whether the misfortunes of the family had anything to do with Grumpe's murder,—for such he held it to be,—he did not pretend to say; he only knew that he had very little now in the way of earthly goods themselves, and could leave but very little to me. "In fact, my son," he said,

"when the breath leaves my body, you will have to leave Wesenthall, for I have had to mortgage it to such an extent, that it can never be redeemed. There will be a few thousand thalers for you, which I have scraped together, and put with our banker, and which you can have when I am gone; but Wesenthall is passed from us and ours forever."

"Then all is lost, father," said I, with tears streaming down my eyes; "for though the house was an old rookery, I loved every room and staircase in it."

"Nay, my son," said he, "not all. Wesenthall may be lost; this house of many shadows may be lost; we may never have it a lighted house, for there may be no hand that can light up its rooms again. I do not look for any now; but there is for you and for me a House of Light nevertheless; only, Hans, we must not look for it here.

"And, Hans, my boy," continued my father, "I shall not be long here to do with shadowed houses, and fading hopes, and the decay of earthly things. I have been, as I fear you too soon must be, without any home on earth; for Wesenthall has had so many shadows and sorrows crowded round it, that it seems scarce worthy of the name of home at all. Yes," continued my father, "shadows *here*, but light *there*—a lighted home." And he pointed with his wasted hand upward to the sky.

Soon after this my father died, and the mortgagee came and took possession of the property. Gladly would I have been absent when the stranger came; but circumstances compelled me to be present. Imagine my horror, my disgust, my rage, which, however, I had to keep to myself, when I saw that the new owner of Wesenthall was a hunchback and a dwarf. Even now I shudder, when I recall his sinister and malicious countenance. One thing, however, I was thankful for, that was that my father had not lived to see this day; and many a night I lay awake after I left Wesenthall, picturing him to myself in his home of light, while the old place was shadowed deeper than ever by the presence of the dwarf.

'I had scant courtesy from the new master of Wesenthall. Giving me to understand that he was master now, and that the sooner I went the better, as all things for which my presence had been wanted were completed, he might be almost said to have turned me out. But I needed no turning out; the dwarf might have spared his rudeness: I was only too ready to go; indeed I might be said to have fled from the house when the new proprietor informed me in confidence that his name was not Baumgarten at all—that that was only his business name—the one by which, for example, he was known as the mortgagee; but that his name was Grumpe. It seemed to me like the murdered dwarf (for he was murdered that Christmas night, by being left to die from want of food, and from cold, and from the effects of that snow) coming back in the very flesh, and taking possession of the house where he was thus done to death.

'When I left Wesenthall I had the world before me. Sad as have been the experiences of my young days, youth is always hopeful, and I thought that I might make a fortune; and who knows, — the chapter of accidents in this world is extraordinary, — perhaps I might become rich; yes, very rich, and be able to buy back Wesenthall again? But mark you, my friends, all my thoughts were about some bright home on earth. Like many another I desired to make my nest here, and here to find all that would satisfy my heart. It is true, I had had, in the history of our family, enough to make me look for some home higher and better than any which can be had here; but my heart yearned for what I saw others in the enjoyment of; and why should not I have a home, as well as anyone else?

'Thus I thought; and, with these ideas, I entered into trade with the few thousand thalers which I drew from our bankers. For a time I prospered; for my partner was a clever man, and made up for my deficient knowledge; and at last, I had amassed enough to set up a home of my own. True! it could be but small — the whole of it would fit into half of one of the wings of Wesent-

hall, but it should be lighted up with love, and there would be no shadow to fall upon it; and if the grandeur of a large place like Wesenthall were wanting, so also should be its many cares.

'In this world we are very blind; and, perhaps, if I had had my desires, and my little home had been undisturbed, I should never have been back in Wesenthall this night; I should not have the pleasure of entertaining my friends in this place now; nor would all this neighbourhood be delighted every Christmas with the spectacle of "the lighted house;" nor would it have the still more substantial advantage of having light of another kind. For now, my friends, the Countess and I make Wesenthall, as far as we can, a centre from which there goes forth light of comfort, and hope, and help, and teaching to all within our reach; especially to all our dependents on this large estate. You will see that, to-morrow night, when they come and bring their children, as they always do, to see "the lighted house," and to enjoy such a Christmas-tree as they could not procure, but which our now ample means enable us to provide.

'At last I succeeded.

'I was not long before I found a wife wholly suited to my mind. Young, and talented, and fond of pleasure, like myself, I thought, "Now, if ever, I shall have done with the shadows, which all my life long have encompassed home," Clara Stauffacher was the daughter of an officer in our army, who lived near the house I had taken; and I soon won her heart.

'For a little time all went well; I could give my wife every thing her heart craved; but the shadow of Wesenthall, though I knew it not, was stealing towards my home.

'One day, when I went to business, I found my partner had not arrived. As the day wore on, I became anxious; besides, I had to ask his opinion on some business matters which had to be done. I went to his house before the time came for closing my office, and there a dreadful spectacle presented itself to me. My partner lay dead, in a little summer-house, at the bottom of his garden. A pistol lay at his side; he had put an end

to himself. The reason for this terrible deed was soon found.

'The books of our firm, which my partner kept, were in a dreadful state. The firm in fact was bankrupt; and there is too much reason for supposing that my partner had misapplied much of its money.

'Clara's brother was my partner. For some years after his death I had but a sorry life with her. When she found I could no longer provide her with the amusements and comforts she formerly enjoyed, she became first pettish, then quarrelsome, then morose. Alas! all my ideas of a home were gone—each year we became more miserable, and, at last, the wretchedness was put an end to by her death. She took to opium to comfort her in her troubles, and it killed her.

'I myself, while she was lying dead in the house, was down with a dreadful fever—none would come near me. While I lay thus I heard, one evening as it was getting dusk, a knock at the door of the humble cottage where I lived. It was Elspeth, the daughter of the new minister. She had heard of my wife's death, and my illness; and now she came with a little basket of such things as were fit for a man in my condition. Thanks to her care, I recovered. I became strong again. Elspeth was at this time twenty-three years of age—she is no older to me now I live with her—(the Countess, my friends, at the other side of the fire); as she was when I first saw her, so shall she be to me to the end; there are impressions of form and feature made on our hearts which never become changed, and for which no others are ever substituted. As she entered my house of misery, an angel of light that evening; so has she been to me ever since, and will be until the end.

'But now, how came we here, and how comes this house to be called "the Erleuchtete?"—ah! that is the most interesting part of the tale.

'You must know, my friends, that the Countess and I were very poor as regards this world's goods, though I have now what I have so often sighed for—a home of light. She taught me that it was not

wordly things which made brightness in a house, but love, and peace, and contentment—the love of God, and love to man. I had to work hard to support her; but we were happy—the house in which Elspeth lived was sure to be "a house of light." And many a time we talked together of the great house of light above—the true home; and of my father, whose earthly home had been all steeped in shadow, but who had, long since, passed away to the land of light.

'At length, when I had learned this lesson, that the light of a home is not in its earthly grandeur, and that every Christian's home should be a lighted house amongst those of his fellows, a strange change came in my life, which brought me back to Wesenthall again.

'One day, at my office, two strange men entered, and accosted me. They said they were men of the law, and had come to know if I could prove myself the son of the late proprietor of Wesenthall. This I did to their satisfaction; and they left without giving me any clue as to who they were, and why they had come. They only said I should hear from them in due course. This was in the summer. It got abroad somehow amongst the neighbours that we were to come in for a great fortune; but week after week passed, and we heard nothing of it.

'At last, in Christmas week, one of the men of the law suddenly presented himself in my office and said, 'Graf Hans von Melchthal, you and your lady are to follow me speedily—you are to ask no questions. I am only at liberty to assure you that your journey will be a pleasant one at the end, at any rate, although, this weather, it may be somewhat cold by the way.'

'Why should we doubt? Why believe that the man meant us any ill? If any thing bad were to happen we had, at least, the satisfaction that we should share the mischance together.

'For many a mile we travelled along in a carriage, the man of the law riding outside. At last, at a village about fifteen miles from this, we were told our conveyance was to be changed. Imagine our astonishment, when from the courtyard of the inn was brought forth a sleigh



with a pair of horses beautifully caparisoned; the servant also was that of a nobleman; and there was an outrider with a blazing torch. On we drove, as in a dream; we knew not whether we had come on enchanted ground, and had been taken possession of by the fairies. At last we came at a quick turn of the road full in view of the old mansion of Wesenthall, lit up in every window. It was a grand and glorious sight. How I kept my senses is to me, even at this moment, a wonder. It will be a wonder to you also, when I tell you what ensued. Two servants attended us as we entered. We were evidently waited for with impatience: and had scarce time to look around us, when one of them whispered to me to follow him quickly. I did so, leaving the Countess in the care of the other; not, however, I confess, without some discomfort.

'Along corridor and room, how familiar! was I led; until at last, not without a shudder, I arrived at the door of the haunted chamber, as it was always called; at any rate, where, in years long gone by, the dwarf Jost Grumpe had died.

"Come in", said a voice, as the servant tapped at the door; and there, in the room stood before me the man of the law, who had travelled faster than we had ourselves.

"He's gone," said the lawyer; and lifting a towel, he revealed the features of Jost Grumpe, the owner of Wesenthall. "He would have given much to have lived to see you, but the exertion of lighting up the house was too much for him; he crept in here after it was done and died an hour ago.

"Graf von Melchthal," said the lawyer, "the man you see lying here had on his soul the plunder of many a widow and orphan; he was a banker, it is true, but he was also a miser and a rogue. Of late years he became haunted with the idea that he must make some great atonement and restitution of his ill-gotten wealth. It was impossible to do that to many whom he had robbed. He knew the story of your family; and it was a diabolical thought that made him purchase the mortgages on this place, and

use the coincidence of his deformity and name to inflict a great curse on your family. He chuckled over it with Satanic glee.

"But he played with edged tools; and of late he had been haunted with the idea that he must part with ill-gotten wealth. And so he determined at last to restore you this place. He put it off a long time, and spent large sums in putting the house in order, comforting himself with the thought that he was engaged in the preliminaries of the work.

"At last his death-illness came upon him. He determined to put you in possession on Christmas-day. He softened and sweetened ever since he fixed the day; and determined to give you a grand reception and welcome. Therefore this illumination. He himself lighted most of the candles. It is well that he has expired with even so much charity to his fellow-creatures. I was in his confidence in all things, as a legal man should be; and have all the papers in regular order. One only thing was not in them, but I know his wishes from his own lips. He said as he lit these candles to-night, 'I should like this house to be called henceforth "the Erleuchtete,"' and indeed it might be as well to change its name. He said also that, he should like it thus lit up every Christmas night. Between ourselves, he had not many good deeds to commemorate; and perhaps he did not like this one to be lost."

"We took possession, my friends, and have lived here ever since. We illuminate the house every Christmas night, according to the dead man's wish.

"But it would be a poor matter if that were all; and if only for this reason, Wesenthall should be called 'the House of Light.' We try, by teaching and example, to shed light abroad amongst our poorer neighbours and tenants. We try, by ministering to their necessities, to dispel some of the shadows of illness and poverty, when they come; but this place, beautiful as it is, is after all only our place of earthly rest, where we keep Christmases for a time. We look higher to find what will be in truth "The Lighted House."

CHRISTMAS CUSTOMS.

"Christmas comes but once a year,
And when it comes it brings good cheer."

The celebration of Christmas has a Roman origin. Oriental Christians, it is true, celebrated the Epiphany, at least since the latter part of the third century, on the 6th of January, and connected with it the festival of the birth of Christ. But it was not until about the middle of the fourth century that any attempt was made to fix the date of the birth of Christ. According to Roman tradition, Pope Julius I. (336—352), ordered a thorough investigation to be made among the imperial archives in reference to the date of the census decreed by the Emperor Augustus. This investigation resulted in the establishment of the 25th of December as the birthday of Christ.

In the East, many of the churches were not convinced of the correctness of the date, and in a sermon of Chrysostom, preached at Antioch on the 25th of December, 386, he admits that the festival is comparatively new among the Syrians. But he himself believes it is the true date, and he presents several arguments in support of his position.

Be that as it may, in Europe there has never been much effective opposition to the celebration of Christmas day; and even in America, New England Puritanism and Scotch Presbyterianism have both failed in their attempts to obliterate the distinctive characteristics of this dearest of Christian festivals. Even the ridiculous perversions of tradition which have made Santa Claus so popular, and which, in many minds, associate him with the Christ-child, are gradually yielding to truer and more churchly conceptions of the day.

We are sometimes told that Christmas is in reality a heathen festival, and many of the Christmas customs are said to have a heathen origin. The Germanic tribes of the north did celebrate, at this time, the festival of Yule. It was the time of the winter solstice, when after a long period of darkness the sun again appeared in the heavens, having obtained a victory over darkness. How

easy was it, therefore, when the first rays of Christianity had illumined the dark forests of the North, to change the heathen festival into a Christian celebration; to rise from one of Nature's symbols to the Divine truth of revelation.

Did the heathen celebrate the return of light? Christ is the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. So, too, the heathen custom of giving presents reminded the Christians of God's "unspeakable gift." Even the Christmas tree has a symbolic significance. In Sweden and Norway it was customary to turn the principal room of the house into a miniature forest of pine and fir trees. But in Germany a single tree sufficed. This tree, with its gilded apples and nuts and gifts of every kind, gleaming with brilliant lights, represented the counterpart of the tree with the forbidden fruit in the garden of Eden.

But there is another thought connected with the Christmas tree, and this idea is very old, and has an Egyptian origin. In the German almanac the 24th of December is dedicated to Adam and Eve, from whom Christ descended according to the flesh, and to whom the first promise of the Redeemer was made. The Christmas tree is the genealogical tree of the Son of man, who is represented by the brightest light at the top. Adam and Eve are represented at the base of the tree, and about it winds the serpent. Thus the fall and redemption of man are taught by means of a symbol which has come down to us from a remote antiquity. Thus is explained a custom which for a long time was a mystery to me, viz., that the lighting of the tree takes place on Christmas Eve, the evening of December 24th.

On Christmas eve the Roman Catholic churches are brilliantly illuminated and almost always there is a representation of the Holy-night. In the foreground is the stable with a manger; before them the Virgin with the Child, and Joseph; near by are the ox and the ass, (Isaiah 1. 3.) on one side stands Micah with a roll of Scripture, referring

to the prophecy of the birth at Bethlehem; in the back ground is a rural landscape in which the shepherds are reposing near their flocks; above them is the celestial glory from which an angel descends with the glad tidings. This simple representation soon became the basis of an extensive theatrical representation. Indeed in Spain their Christmas plays were the source from which dramatic art proceeded.

In Protestant churches these representations were forbidden, but so much the more did they establish themselves in the homes of the people. Even in this country there is, or was, one place where these representations may be seen in all their glory. Some twenty-five years ago I used to see these Christ-Putzes as they were called in the Moravian homes of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. But in the course of time the resemblance to the Scriptural account was very light, and the Putz was rather ornamental than religious.

Among the Germans, Christmas is peculiarly a children's festival, but in Sweden and Norway it is a day of joy for everybody. In the country every house stands open to the passing stranger and he is at liberty to sit down to the table that has been expressly filled for him. In many parts of Norway even the tavern keepers charge nothing for food and lodgings.

The custom of making each other presents on Holy-eve is conscientiously maintained among all classes, and as everybody must have a present, the ladies have their hands full for weeks and months beforehand in order to be prepared.

Even the dumb beasts get their share of the good things. The horses get more oats than usual, the horned cattle a better quality of hay, the dog a generous soup, and even the birds have placed for them in front of every barn a pole or fir-tree on which has been fastened a sheaf of oats.

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CATHARINE VON BORA,

The Wife of Martin Luther.

Translated from the German of Armin Stein, by M. Drisler.

CHAPTER III.—THE DAWN OF DAY.

At the window of a corner room in the corner house of the market place in Torgau sat the merchant Leonard Koppe, worthy town councillor and tax collector, a man of about 50 years of age, with a round, clever, kindly face. He sat leaning his head on his hand, with a far away look in his eyes. At times he changed his position uneasily and passed his hand across his forehead, seemingly lost in thoughts which he could not disentangle. His wife, Susan, in passing to and fro, had several times asked him what had gone so wrong in Wittenberg that he could not bestow a word on his wife, but she either received no answer at all, or one so short that she turned away in pique.

Suddenly the merchant tapped on the window and beckoned to some one in the street. A few moments later a meagre

old man entered the room, the chandler Wolfgang Tomnitzsch whom Leonard Koppe greeted cordially and invited to a seat near himself.

"You were passing my home just in the nick of time, good friend. You are a man of sound judgment, and as I have need of counsel, I called you in."

"Go on," said Herr Wolfgang, without any change of countenance.

Leonard undid his doublet as he began:

"Yesterday I returned from Wittenberg where I have been on business. I went to hear our good Dr. Martin preach in St. Mary's church—such a sermon, the words ring in my ears! After the sermon I came upon Luther as he was returning home from the church. He took hold of me by the coat and said:

"Is it you then, friend Koppe? I was

just thinking of you, and suddenly I see you before me as if you had fallen from the sky. This seems like a sign from God to point out that you are the man to accomplish the task which lies so near my heart. Are you not known in the convent of Nimptschen? Do you not supply them with cloth and wax?"

I answered yes, and the Doctor went on:

"Then listen! In the convent are nine maidens of noble birth who are weary of the life, but do not know how to obtain their freedom. In their distress they have appealed to me for help which they sought in vain from their own kindred. I would gladly aid them, but my arm is but short and reaches not from Wittenberg to Nimptschen. I cannot go myself to free them secretly or by force, and I have need of a man who will lend me his arm. I entreat you, dear Koppe, to do this for God's sake, for you know the place, and you have a clear head that can manage cleverly, and a kind heart that has compassion on the wretched. Will you undertake the task?"

"I said yes, for who can resist Luther's glowing eyes and friendly voice, and moreover, I was proud that the great man who fears neither the pope nor the devil, should stand talking to me in the public street as to a trusted friend. But when he was gone, my heart sank, for I felt that I had built a tower and not counted the cost. All the way home these thoughts tormented me, and now I sit here and consider how to carry the business through, for the more closely I look at the matter the more difficulty I see in it. How shall I make my plan known to the nuns without the Abbess' suspecting it? Despite her seventy years, she has eyes like a lynx and a nose like a fox. And if I should succeed in speaking to the nuns secretly, how would it be possible to get them out of the convent unobserved? I might get one away, but a whole wagon full? Even if they should escape safely, we would have to pass through Duke George's territory, and that would be dangerous, for Duke George hates Luther worse than he hates the devil. Good friend, what do you advise me to do?"

Tommitzsch half closed his eyes and shook his head thoughtfully. After a pause he looked up, saying:

"The flight of these nuns touches my heart, for but lately I saw the joy of my niece who, by her cousin's help, escaped from the convent at Würzen. It was like the rejoicing of one raised from death to life, it must be a good work to help any back to life. Therefore, the case of these nine nuns of Nimptschen moves me, though I have not known them, and when Dr. Martin wishes a thing, who can resist him? Go bravely about the work, friend, I will stand by you."

"Many, many thanks!" cried the merchant joyfully, shaking his friend's hand warmly. "If I have your dear hand to help me, all will be well."

The candle maker answered quietly: "It is a good work, and God will help us. Listen, friend, when do you next carry cloth and wax to the convent?"

"I may do so any day, as Easter is at hand," returned Herr Leonard. "What idea has struck you?"

"What idea has struck me?" returned Tommitzsch. "This, how easy it would be to hand a letter to the nuns at such a time."

Koppe listened attentively, and after a short consultation the candle maker left his friend's house.

On the next morning, a clumsy wagon covered with sailcloth jolted heavily along the highway from Torgau towards Grimma, and on the evening of the same day stopped before the door of the convent at Nimptschen at the hour that the nuns were allowed to wander in the garden after supper.

The arrival of a wagon was always a great event in the solitude of the convent, especially when Herr Leonard Koppe of Torgau came, the friendly, chatty man who brought all kinds of notions in his pockets and was always full of amusing stories (for the brides of Heaven liked right well to listen now and then to an earthly jest).

To-day, the Torgau merchant was soon surrounded by the nuns and gayly displayed his wares. And yet he appeared to be looking for some one, and it seemed



The Cottage near Schleswig.

BY GERTRUDE H. LINNELL.

Far beyond the walls of Schleswig
Many a lonely cottage stands,
Helpless when the fierce invaders
Sweep across the open lands.
In the pause between the battles,
Friendly Danes no longer near,
Angry hordes of Swedes and Russians
Fill each anxious heart with fear,
As they onward press toward Schleswig
Past a cottage, lone and drear.

Far from Schleswig, in that cottage,
Hear the pious mother sing:
"Lord, with Thee is peace and safety,
All my fears to Thee I bring."
But the grandson laughs; "Good mother,
That a poor defense will prove!"
Youth, that has seen less of sorrow,
Has not learned the trust of love.
In the cottage, poor, defenseless,
Still she sings her song of love.

"Build, dear Lord, a wall around us;"
Is the mother's earnest prayer.
"All our foes will fear before us,
Guarded by thy loving care."
But the grandson laughs; "Good mother,
That is not so quickly done!
Can he build a wall around us
Ere the setting of the sun?"
"Build, dear Lord, a wall around us;"
Still the pious mother sung.

"Ah! my child, my trust is truer,
If it be the dear Lord's will,
He can build a wall around us.
All his word he can fulfill!"
Near and nearer come the foemen!
Beat of drum, and trumpet's blare,
Tramp of horse and roll of cannon
Fill the frosty evening air.
"Build, dear Lord, a wall around us,"
Is the pious mother's prayer.

All around are shouts of terror
And the Russians' fiercer cry,
As they sweep resistless onward,
But this cottage pass they by.
"Hush thy song! It will betray us!"
Cries the grandson, pale with fear.
All night long the tramp of footsteps
Passing, passing, still they hear.
"Build, dear Lord, a wall around us,"
Sings the mother, low and clear.

Fierce all night the north wind rages.
Cold the snow-flakes that it brings.
"Children, close the window shutters;
Trust and hope," the mother sings.
But the snow-flakes falling, drifting,
Only bring another fear,
For the Cossacks on their sledges,
Cursing, shouting, now draw near.
"Build, dear Lord, a wall around us,"
Is the pious mother's prayer.

"Build, dear Lord, a wall around us;"
Sings she softly, all the night.
In the morning all is quiet,
"Look, my son, if all be right!"
At the door—ah! what a wonder!
See a wall most steep and fair!
All night long the snow had drifted
Till the hut was buried there.
"Build, dear Lord, a wall around us,"
Was the pious mother's prayer.

Said the grandson, "Yes, dear mother.
The good Lord has heard your prayer;
He has built a wall around us;
We can trust his loving care!"
In the fifth night of the year,
Only forty years ago,
Was the cottage thus defended
By the wondrous wall of snow.
"Build, dear Lord, a wall around us!"
Sang the mother, soft and low.

(The Christian Union.)

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Our High Priest.

Höchster Priester, der du dich.

Great High-priest, who deign'st to be	Tear self-love from out my heart,
Once the sacrifice for me,	Though it cost me bitter smart.
Take this living heart of mine,	
Lay it on Thy holy shrine.	Kindle, mighty Love, the pyre,
	Quick consume me in thy fire,
Love I know accepteth nought,	Fain were I of self bereft,
Save what Thou, O Love, has wrought;	Nought but Thee within me left.
Offer Thou my sacrifice,	
Else to God it cannot rise.	So may God the Righteous brook
	On my sacrifice to look;
Slay in me the wayward will,	In whose sight no gift has worth
Earthly sense and passion kill,	Save a Christ-like life on earth.

Angelus, 1624—1677.

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CATHARINE VON BORA,

The Wife of Martin Luther.

Translated from the German of Armin Stein, by M. Drisler.

CHAPTER IV. — LIBERTY!

It was the Saturday of Holy Week in the year 1523. The solemn awful stillness of Good Friday had given place to stir and movement as soon as early mass had been said. True, silence still reigned, for the day on which the body of our Lord had lain in the grave demanded seriousness and holy calm, but the sisters' hands were busily occupied in making due preparation for the morrow's high festival. Some of the nuns sat in a large outhouse twining wreaths of moss and cedar with which they would afterwards deck the pictures of the saints and the life size statue of the Virgin Mary in the chapel. Others busied themselves in adorning the altar, divested of all ornament for the Good Friday services, placing upon it the altar-cloth of white silk embroidered with gold and the brightly polished candlesticks supplied with new wax candles from the store just brought by Leonhard Koppe. Others again were engaged in placing in the altar niche the plaster cast representing the resurrection

morning — the open sepulchre with the terrified soldiers falling to the ground and the Saviour issuing from the tomb bearing aloft a banner.

In such preparations the whole morning was spent. The noonday meal passed monotonously, for the rigid fast allowed but scanty fare. In the afternoon the convent was like a desert. The nuns sat apart in their cells wearied in mind and body with the exertions of Holy Week. Since Palm Sunday they had known but little rest, as most of their time had been spent in the chapel in hearing mass, in fasting, in prayer, in praise, in confession. Many a nun rejoiced at the approach of Easter, not only because on that day our Saviour rose from the dead for the salvation of the world, but also because that day brought rest to her wearied and overtaxed frame and new strength to her drooping spirit.

The evening came at length, and once more the bell summoned all to prayer and to the meagre, gray, fast-day soup, then the last sound of voices died away in

the convent. The weary nuns stretched themselves upon their couches to gather what strength they might, for their last effort, the Easter vigil, that solemn midnight service, which with its mysterious intimations leads on the soul ever upward to the moment when the first rays of the rising sun bid the exulting chorus raise their joyful song which burst forth to the sound of drums and trumpets :

"Christ is arisen"

* * * * *

The night was damp, chilly and dark. A keen north-west wind drove flying clouds across the face of the moon whose light cast weird shadows on the earth while the boughs of the forest trees sighed and rustled in the breeze.

On the road leading from Torgau a large wagon laden with barrels moved slowly forward. When for a moment the moon shone through the clouds three men, closely wrapped in cloaks, might be seen sitting together in silence on the load.

When the wagon had almost reached the convent it turned aside from the main road. One of the men sprang down and took hold of the horses' heads.

"Do you know the road exactly, comrade?" whispered some one from the wagon. "No fear!" was the answer, "I know every step of it. We can leave the wagon among the elder trees down by the water, then Caspar can water the horses and you, gossip, come with me."

Caspar, Leonhard Koppe's nephew, jumped down from the wagon, threw some hay to the horses and brought a pail of water from the pond. Meanwhile the two others made their way cautiously toward the convent.

"Do you see the garden wall?" whispered Leonhard pointing to it. "I shall creep along this to Catharine von Bora's cell. See, that is it, yonder, where a light glimmers. I am glad to see that all the other windows are dark; that proves my guess right, the nuns will sleep till midnight. It is not yet ten o'clock, it would be well to creep round the convent lest something suspicious should be about. The two men crawled along, feeling their way carefully, Koppe holding Tommitzsch

by the hand as the latter had a tendency to stumble in the uncertain light. Their path led them close to the fish pond and was not without danger, as the willows which lined the steep bank twined somewhat dangerously around their legs and the deep shade of the elders made the patches of moonlight seem brighter.

"The abbess is not asleep yet," said Koppe uneasily, as they came in sight of the eastern side of the convent. The old lady takes but little rest and wanders around at night like a ghost, frightening the nuns out of their senses. She is a queer mortal and has often angered me with her suspiciousness and close bargaining. In her own eyes she is a saint and her good works counted up would reach to heaven like the Tower of Babel. She is afraid of nothing however except a screech owl, but the hooting of that bird drives her frantic. In the spring she will pay a gold gulden for every egg that is brought her."

Wolfgang Tommitzsch muttered something that sounded very like an imprecation. A few moments later he stopped and touched his companion's arm, "Friend, I go no further with you!"

"What's the matter?" said Koppe perplexed.

"Oh," Tommitzsch answered carelessly, you can easily carry off the nuns without my help, and I can do better for you by turning back and engaging the attention of the abbess."

"What are you going to do?" inquired Koppe, still more astonished.

Tommitzsch calmed him, saying: I can imitate a screech owl to perfection as well as a cat and a sparrow-hawk, so when the time comes I will hoot under the windows of the abbess to distract her attention while you do your work."

"A good thought," said Koppe well pleased, clapping his friend on the shoulder. How fortunate I am to have you as a helper. In a few minutes then we will begin." The two men clasped hands and moved away, wishing each other success.

With even increased care Koppe crept along beneath the garden wall until he came to the place where some crumbling stones made the ascent easier. He

climbed up noiselessly and crawled along the top. At the same moment a short cry broke the stillness of the night, starting him greatly until he remembered himself and smiled, saying, "The screech owl."

The call was repeated again and again,

take in the height. What should he do? How should he make his presence known? He did not care to call aloud. And how should he get the nuns down in safety? He tried tapping on the wall with his hand, but in vain; the sound could not penetrate the thick walls. Taking a



and meantime Koppe reached in safety the window from which shone the signal light. He stood up — alas! the window was so high that he could not reach it even with his hand, he had made a mis-

key from his pocket he tapped again; this gave a ringing sound. Hark! there was a stir in the cell, the window opened softly, and Koppe knew by the sound that some one had put out a head.

"The deliverer," he whispered and caught in return a faint, "God be praised!"

The head was withdrawn, but almost immediately put forth again and Koppe heard the words: "Wait till we fasten the rope to the bars."

In another moment the rope let fall struck his hat, and an instant later the first nun stood beside him on the wall.

"Creep past me!" whispered he to the trembling girl, "I will stand here and receive the others." Again came the cry of the screech owl, but there was no other sound except the wind swaying the tree tops.

The nuns descended quickly and crept along the wall behind the first one to the place designated; Koppe followed and climbed down first himself, then aided each in turn to descend.

One of the sisters entered involuntarily a suppressed cry of joy. Koppe checked her strongly: "It is not yet time for rejoicing. Follow me quickly!"

They soon reached the wagon, and the merchant concealed the nuns among the casks covering them so completely with straw that nothing could be seen of them, then hastily summoning the screech owl from his post he started the horses.

Dark, gloomy and forbidding like a tomb stood the convent. Not the faintest gleam of light was visible, even the cell of the abbess was dark. Doubtless the cry of the screech owl had had its intended effect and the abbess had sought refuge beneath the bed clothes from the torturing voice of the bird of death.

The nuns crouched without moving in their hiding place, no one dared utter a word and upon all the sense of past anxiety and the dread of new dangers pressed heavily.

In this manner an hour passed; suddenly the wagon stopped and a dry voice asked the wagoner what he carried? They were on the borders of the Elector of Saxony's domains.

"Kegs of herrings!" answered Koppe briefly. "Don't detain me long, friend, I am almost perished with cold."

A man climbed upon the wagon and felt of the contents: "Pass on!" he

cried and the driver touched up the horses.

Now began to be some movement among the straw and whisperings were heard and even Koppe and Tommitzsch joined in now and then. The nuns wanted to come out of their somewhat stifling hiding place, but this their careful champion would not yet allow. When a few hours later the eastern sky began to reddens with the first rays of the rising sun a stir began among the casks and as with one accord broke from the rescued nuns the exulting hymn: "Christ is arisen!"

Leonhard had raised his hand to check them, but he soon dropped it to listen to the singing which seemed to him to come from heaven.

There were tears in his eyes as the nuns crowded around him, pressed his hands and poured forth their thanks, not forgetting to include his two helpers in their gratitude.

Glowing with holy emotions Catharine von Bora sprang to her feet and raising her clasped hand to heaven, cried, "Easter! Easter! O word of life and peace! O everlasting Saviour, hear our resurrection hymn. We were dead and now we live! The grave has given up Christ, its prey, and the golden Eastern sun welcomes us to life. Alleluja! Thou world from which I fled receive me again, for the holiness of the convent was but a delusion. Receive me again, O world, in which dwell living men on whom God's sunlight falls; in thee I will serve God more truly than in the convent cell. Thy kingdom is great, O Lord, Thou ruler of the world; Thou wilt find a place in it even for poor Catharine!"

CHAPTER V. — ADOPTED.

In the twilight of an evening early in May, Master Philip Reichenbach sat talking confidentially with his wife by the window of a high, gabled house surmounted by two dragons' heads that stood on the burgomaster's street of Wittenberg. Master Philip dearly loved this hour when, the heavy day's work over, he could return home and sit at his ease sociably chatting with his wife until the time came to light the lamps.

Master Philip was a short, stout man about forty years of age, much esteemed in Wittenberg and especially in its council chamber for his temperate judgment and sound sense. His impulsive little wife Elsa must have been very pretty in her youth, and even now her fresh pleasant face showed that she still possessed something more than outward beauty.

The furniture of the house betokened wealth, but the large rooms were very silent. No joyous sound of children's voices enlivened them, but this only drew the married pair more closely together.

"So the Doctor has provided for the last two of the runaways," said the syndic.

"The two Zeschaus?" asked Mistress Else, interested at once. "God be praised! How I have pitied the good Doctor! He must have been torn in pieces! How he can accomplish all that he does is a mystery to me. Any other man in his place would have broken down long ago. Every thing comes upon him. The silent convent is now like a dovecot, there is going and coming all day long. Does any one ever attempt to keep account of the letters that he has to write? He has the whole country on his shoulders and must have his eyes everywhere at once. He must keep watch over everything as from a high tower and like a ruler of spirits care alike for great and small affairs. I almost hate the people who rush to him about so many matters and fritter away his precious time. I was even angry at first with the nuns at Nimptschen because they appealed to Dr. Martin for help. I was more provoked still when, after he had effected their deliverance, they must needs come here to be a burden upon him. It is a comfort to know that his incessant, powerful intercession with the Elector has succeeded in obtaining a refuge for them all. Yes, indeed, I am not only comforted, but glad at last and thankful that by this means our beloved Catharine has entered our home.

The syndic was well pleased at his wife's last words and as he sat softly stroking his knee, answered: "I am glad to hear this, Elsa; for I feared lest the new guest whom we received for

Luther's sake might be a burden to you. I thought she might break up our quiet comfort and disturb the peaceful order of our household, for Catharine von Bora's nature is very different from yours."

Mistress Elsa gave a happy little laugh: "See," she said, "all has happened contrary to my fears. You are right; Catharine von Bora has other ways and different thoughts from mine, there is something—I can not tell what—so grand and noble in her that makes me seem so little in my own eyes that I revere her. She seems proud and haughty, Dr. Luther said lately, but this pride is no fault, it is rather maidenly reserve and a scorn of all that is base and low that fills her mind. And then she sees so clearly and speaks so frankly without pretense or a shade of hypocrisy, and her judgment is so just that I often gladly ask her advice. And what joy to see her happiness! She sings and jests and laughs like a child, and often falls upon my neck and kisses me and exclaims with tears: 'Oh, how happy I am, and to you and the great Doctor I owe it all!' She always calls Luther the great Doctor, and when he begins to speak she holds her hands and stands to listen most piously. As she used to look up to the pictures of the saints, so she now looks up to Dr. Martin, and indeed he seems greater to her than many a one canonised by the Church. You should see her, dear Philip, when she is busy in the kitchen or about the house. You feared lest she should make work for me, but now on the contrary my hands oft lie idle in my lap because the work that I had planned is always done before I could put my hands to it. She reads my thoughts and wishes in my eyes and her hands and head are quick to learn, though the employment is new and strange to her. Often I think as I see her housewifely ways: 'Happy the man who shall win this Martha!' and I feel reluctant to give her up to any one else and sorrow that the day must come where a lover will take her from us."

"Are you thinking of the noble young Nuremberger, Hieronymus Baumgärtner?" interposed Herr Reichenbach.

"I have not failed to note how wist-

fully his eyes followed Catharine when he dined with us lately on your name day. It strikes me too that since that day he passes the house and stops to speak to us much more frequently than is necessary. This need not disquiet you, however, for Catharine is shy enough of men. It is four weeks to-day since she entered our house and she has not once been on the street except to go to church when Dr. Luther preached."

Elsa shook her head and looked at her husband with a smile:

"I understand a woman's heart better than you do. A modest shrinking and reserve are a woman's fairest ornament, but they do not prevent a man from seeking her, they rather serve as a charm to

beams, falling upon the paintings by Lucas Cranach which adorned the walls of the room, made them glow like fire.

"See, how beautifully the sun is setting, what a lovely evening it is!" said the syndic. "Let us walk for a while in the garden, till supper is ready. Tell me, are the peas planted and the cabbages set out? It should have been done yesterday, but I could not make time for the work."

Mistress Elsa could not tell, and husband and wife crossed the wide hall to the court, and through this entered the garden which was of considerable extent, planted on the right with fruit trees and on the left with vegetables and flowers.



draw him on, and I easily perceived that the looks of the young Nuremberger do not displease Catharine. It is not those who love her that make her fear to cross our threshold, but those who hate and scorn her. In spite of my care to keep it from her, she knows what evil is spoken of the escaped nuns of Nimptschen. She knows too that when the worthy citizen of Torgau, Leonhard Koppe, was in great fear of the clergy, Dr. Luther openly addressed a panegyric to him and made special mention of the rescue of the nine nuns. For these reasons her womanly feeling leads her to shun the open street and the society of men, but this will not be so always."

"Where is Catharine?" asked the syndic.

"In her room," returned Mistress Elsa. The sun was now setting, and its ruddy

A woman busily employed was kneeling before a bed freshly dug up.

"Here she is!" cried Master Philip in a tone of surprise and went quickly towards the girl, who sprang up, startled.

"Ei, ei, Catharine, my child, what are you doing here?" said the syndic.

Catharine answered with a soft smile: "The peas looked up at me so pitifully, asking if I would not make them a nice little bed in the soft ground, and the cabbages hung down their leaves so that I was obliged to plant them."

The syndic looked keenly at her work. "But who taught you to do such a work? Can these tender fingers, accustomed only to hold the rosary or to fold themselves in prayer, do such rough, coarse work."

Catharine looked up brightly at the syndic: "Love is a good teacher, and it is easy to learn what one likes."

"But you must spare yourself and not overwork that tender body of yours," said the syndic, shaking his finger at her.

Catharine laughed as she shook her head, "Did you spare yourselves when you took upon your shoulders the burden of a stranger and a runaway nun? Would that I could do more to repay you for your Christlike goodness to me, but it is my daily prayer that God will reward you as the poor Catharine can never do." How beautiful the maiden looked as she thus poured out her warm feelings! Mistress Elsa pressed her silently to her heart, while the syndic turned aside into another path that his emotion might not be seen.

As he walked the length of the garden he saw everywhere signs that some one had been at work cleaning the paths, weeding the beds, and tending the flowers. He did not ask again who had done this, but, well pleased, looked after Catharine who was walking up and down arm in arm with his wife chatting confidentially.

Meantime Sybil, the old servant, announced Dr. Luther who in his black monk's cowl followed her directly: "God be with you, Master Philip!" cried he cheerfully, "How goes it with you and with that poor child who has cost me so much anxiety?"

The syndic took off his black cap and stretched out a welcoming hand: "Be no longer anxious about her, Dr. Luther," he said.

"But will she not be a burden to you, Master Philip? You made a great sacrifice for my sake, and it troubles me when I think that I do not now see the way to relieve you. I wish some one would come to make a wife of the maiden. That is a woman's true calling."

The syndic looked gravely, even sadly at Luther: "Worthy Doctor, you have done so much for us, grant us one favor more! Trouble yourself no more about us, for it is no sacrifice to keep Catharine, but it will be a very great one to let her go. We love her as our own child."

Luther's pale face grew bright with joy, and shaking the syndic heartily by the hand he exclaimed: "A true friend is a precious jewel not to be bought

with money, and truly from henceforward you will be a thousand times dearer to me than before."

By this time the women had come up. As they drew near Catharine grasped Mistress Elsa by the arm and whispered, "The great Doctor!" but Elsa did not pause, only quickened her steps to greet the welcome guest.

Luther's glance rested with pleasure upon the cheerful countenance of the former nun whose once pale cheeks were beginning to grow rosy in the fresh spring air, and a smile crossed his lips as he observed on her dress the traces of her gardening labors.

"Ah, Fräulein Catharine," said he playfully, "you are become a true worldling. How do you like it in the world? See, even your dress and your hands show how earthly your thoughts are, and with what common things you busy yourself. Would you not rather return to the place where you were far removed from the wicked world and ever lifted up to heaven in clouds of incense?"

Catharine cast down her eyes shyly and her color deepened: "I would rather be in the world," she murmured, "it is so beautiful here. Only, I would not be of the world; I would serve God truly and consecrate myself to Him. But last Sunday, in your sermon, you taught us that we could serve God even in such little things as wood splitting and cabbage planting if the heart is right."

The Doctor was about to answer, when Elsa interposed:

"Will you not stay and sup with us, Dr. Luther?" He looked at her with a merry smile:

"How could you guess so exactly my thoughts? Had you not asked me I was about to invite myself, otherwise I must have gone to bed hungry, for my servant Wolfgang just come to me very disconsolate: 'Doctor, what will you have for supper? There was a piece of baked fish in the cupboard which I meant to warm up, but a cat must have stolen it, there is nothing left but the head and a few bones.'"

With real pity Catharine looked to the man who distributed so freely to all the world the Bread of Life and himself

wanted food; and still more she wondered at the greatness of mind which could jest at this want.

She softly whispered her thoughts to Mistress Elsa who answered in the same tone: "He has scarcely enough to live on; for his salary as professor is only twenty-two thalers and twelve groschen, yet he gives freely to the poor who drain his purse daily."

"The great Doctor must have a hard, solitary life in his dull convent without any woman to tend him and care for him," continued Catharine. "Wolfgang may be a faithful servant, but cannot care for him as a woman could." Thus talking, the party entered the house where Sybil had prepared the supper.

"Would you like to hear some news, good friends?" said Luther, when they had taken their places and begun their meal. "A martyr's crown must be prepared for Leonhard Koppe, the nun-stealer, who was to die the death of a heretic. The enterprise which he undertook in the name of God has brought down a great blessing. It was useless to attempt to conceal what happened at Nimptschen and our good Catharine has many imitators. To-day, I heard that four nuns together with their abbess have escaped from the Benedictine convent at Zeitz, six from that at Sormitz, eight from the convent of the Cistercians at Bentitz on the Saal, and sixteen from the Dominican nunnery at Wiederstedt in Mansfeld. I know Fräulein Catharine will be glad to hear that three more maidens have left Nimptschen, not secretly, but taken away by their families. I rejoice heartily at this, and in order that it may come to pass more frequently that the convent doors open of their own accord, I am writing the story of a nun, Florentina of Oberweimar, recently escaped from the convent of Neuhefta near Eisleben. This I will have printed and distributed so that all the world may know what the convent system is and may cease to persecute Leonhard Koppe."

Mistress Elsa passed the Doctor a dish of stewed fruit and pressed him to help himself. "That is good news, and our dear Catharine looks especially pleased.

I hope that you will leave me the history of Florentina as soon as it is printed. But do not forget to eat while you are talking. It would do you good to take a cordial, for I see again in those dark hollows beneath your eyes the signs of work and watching."

Luther helped himself mechanically, as he answered: "That is the fault of those godless latter-day prophets who while I remained invisible as Junker George laid waste the vineyard of the Lord. It needs much toil to restore what they destroyed, and it is more difficult to build up than to pull down. Often, when in the morning I look at my untouched bed I say, friend Carlstadt, this I owe to you!"

"But tell me," said Mistress Elsa, "how it is that you preach, deliver lectures, write books, translate the Bible, receive and write letters, give counsel, do work needing the strength of ten men and yet are never tired, always cheerful and even find time to work at the turning lathe with Wolfgang, to tend your flowers and talk with your friends."

Luther answered, smiling: "For all this but two things are needful: Order and Prayer. Are there not sixty minutes in every hour? Any one may do much in sixty minutes if he does all with system and marks out his time well. Then prayer is like a living brook which refreshes soul and body alike. See, this Psalter,"—taking one from his breast pocket—"is my constant companion and friend, who tells me always what I ought to do and helps me to do it. Prayer is stronger than the devil, and if I were to omit to pray for one day only, my faith would be weakened. God always helps us if we work and pray."

Catharine listened in reverential silence. Now she murmured aside to herself: "The great Doctor! What a wonderful man! Happy anyone, who is continually with him and can observe his ways and follow his example! O that I could serve him as his maid servant!"

Mistress Elsa looked earnestly at the girl and silently stroked her hand.

Meanwhile Dr. Martin had begun a discussion with the syndic about the knight Franz von Sickingen whose sad

fate was stirring men's minds just then; for the strong man had been overcome by one stronger than he. The princes of Hesse, Pfalz and Trèves had besieged and conquered him in his own fortress of Landstuhl.

"I thought it not well done of you, Doctor," said the syndic, "that you rejected Sickingen's overtures. I thought his good sword would be strong to protect the gospel and might defend it against pope and emperor, for Sickingen's power increased from month to month and the emperor trembled before him. But in this also you judged rightly."

Luther shook his head sorrowfully:

"I grieved for you, Sickingen. You would mean well by me, and yet you were a tempter to me; and I must needs bid you avault, for you would have advanced the cause of God with carnal weapons. This does not please the Lord and avails nought for his Gospel; rather, does it harm, for the Word of God needs no earthly support or stay to help its course, it has within itself the strength to overcome the world. The Word and not the sword must prevail. See, Reichenbach, if I had entrusted the cause of the Gospel to Sickingen, it would have fallen with Sickingen."

But, good friends, it is time for me to return home, as Florentina is waiting for me and poor Wolfgang also. Might I ask you to give me some supper for the poor fellow, who serves me so faithfully."

Before Mistress Elsa had time to do it, Catharine had wrapped up some smoked meat neatly and offered it to Dr. Martin. He took it with thanks and bade them all good night.

CHAPTER VI.—A SHORT-LIVED FIRE.

One August morning of that same year, 1523, Mistress Elsa came into her husband's room, very much excited. Her cheeks were flushed and her breath came so quickly, that she could scarcely speak: "Now I know, who it is that lays a bouquet in the window very early every morning. I watched, and I find that it is just as I thought."

The syndic rubbed his sleepy eyes and

looked at his wife in a perplexed way, "You mean the Nuremberger?" "Yes, indeed. He has behaved in the most extraordinary way lately. He disturbs her even in church, for he stands directly opposite and never takes his eyes off her—shame to say."

"And what does Catharine think of it?"

"Oh, her heart seems to incline to him. When he looks at her, her cheeks glow, and she, who is usually so silent, becomes quite talkative when his name is mentioned. When we supped lately at Lucas Cranach's and met young Baumgärtner she talked willingly with him, and on the way home asked me how far Nuremberg was from Wittenberg and whether all Suabians were as hearty in their talk as the young Hieronymus."

"And what did you tell her?"

"I told her that it was a long way to Nuremberg and I did not know whether the speech of the Suabians was heartier than that of the Saxons, but I did know that a pleasant mode of speech did not prove that a man had a good heart."

"And what did she say?" "What did she say? Why she looked perplexed for a moment and then nodded silently."

I hope then she understood you, for I should be sorry if Catharine left us to follow Hieronymus. I would rather give her, if we must, to some worthy man who would make her happy. This Nuremberger seems to me too shallow and fickle for her."

"I agree with you," returned Elsa quickly. "Yet it seems to me that Dr. Luther thinks well of the young man. He has often praised him for his industry in acquiring knowledge during his stay in Wittenberg. I am afraid that Hieronymus would have an advocate in Luther if he came to ask our Catharine in marriage."

"Dear Elsa," began the syndic laying his hand on her shoulder, "here we must assist the inexperience of youth with our wisdom and experience. Catharine is as our own child, and it would be a sin did we not guard our daughter from possible sorrow and long heartache. I can easily understand how she should be attracted by the young man, for he is

handsome and has pleasing manners ; moreover, he is the first man who has paid court to her. When she has seen more of men she will be cooler and wiser."

Mistress Elsa broke off the discussion by begging her husband to dress himself and come to prayers.

As they were entering the rooms where Sybil had just brought up the breakfast, some one gave three knocks on the street door and a well dressed young man appeared who, saluting those present in a graceful manner, remained standing on the threshold until the master of the house, evidently disturbed at his appearance, invited him to enter : "You honor me with an early visit, Herr Baumgärtner," said the syndic going to meet him with outstretched hand, while Mistress Elsa hastened to take her place at the table and arrange the coffee cups.

The young man inclined his head courteously : "I must apologize for disturbing you thus early, but my hasty departure left me no other time to bid you good bye."

Herr Reichenbach looked up at the tall youth in astonishment, and Mistress Elsa who had kept back till then, now hastened forward : "What do you say, Herr Baumgärtner ? You are about to leave Wittenberg ?"

The student assented sadly :

"It is hard for me to leave a place where I have been so happy ; but a son must be obedient, and my father requires my immediate return."

With seeming warmth and ill-concealed joy Mistress Elsa urged him to breakfast with them, inquired with much appearance of interest the reason of his father's commands, and was so talkative and friendly in her manner that he wondered greatly at this sudden kindness on the part of one hitherto so cool. His eyes wandered restlessly towards the door as if he expected some one, and the longer he waited the more uneasy and absent he became.

At last he rose to go. Something that he could not utter seemed to be on his mind. At last, collecting himself and clearing his voice, he asked after Catharine : "I should like to say good bye to her, since I . . ."

He broke off, for the ~~gent~~ pale plexity of his hosts increased him it confusion. After a painful pause, ~~his~~ Elsa answered :

"She is in her room — she ~~has~~ slept ill or she would have been down to prayers. If you have anything special to say to her, I will tell her with pleasure."

A mingled expression of pain and anger passed over the young man's handsome face, and his upper-lip curled, so that the teeth were just visible above the beard, and his large dark eyes rested searchingly upon the face of the little woman who grew hot and cold and hastily busied herself in arranging some part of her dress which nevertheless was in perfect order.

It seemed almost like a reproof when the syndic said to his wife : "Go and see what keeps Catharine so long to-day," and Mistress Elsa willingly turned to obey the command.

At this moment the door opened and Catharine entered. At the sight of the youth she stopped short and casting down her eyes, blushed deeply. The syndic came to her assistance, saying, as he took her hand in a fatherly manner, "Come, Catharine, bid good bye to Herr Baumgärtner who has come to take leave of us before his return home." Catharine grew pale and her breath came quickly as with a shy look of inquiry she turned to the young man. He drew near and sought to take her hand : "I would ask you, fair maiden, that you would think of me kindly as I shall always remember you until God so orders it that I may see you again."

"Then you will return to Wittenberg ?" asked Catharine and Mistress Elsa together, the former glowing with pleasure, the latter visibly dismayed.

The young man stretched out his arms with enthusiasm : "How could I forget you, Wittenberg, fair town, that has formed my mind and blessed my heart ! Not long, I trust, will filial duty detain me in Nuremberg and then I will speedily return. Till then, God protect you !"

He broke off abruptly, for his voice failed him, and he would not betray his emotion. He bade them all a hasty farewell and was gone.

late found quiet reigned during the for two days in the syndic's house. By husband and wife talked but little together at the twilight hour, while Catharine sat up stairs in her room in deep sorrow leaning her head on her hand. Her heart was empty and now that Hieronymus was gone she first realized clearly how much she had liked him. She would have consoled herself with the love of her adopted parents, but this could not satisfy her. Nothing could compensate for what she had lost, and something told her only too surely that Hieronymus would not return. Yet when the tears would break forth, she checked them resolutely and set herself with all her strength to conquer her sorrow and not to let the good Reichenbachs see that she, so bound to them by gratitude, had preferred to them another who seemed for some reason not agreeable to them. As she questioned her heart it seemed to her a sin thus to have forgotten her benefactors for a stranger. And now she sternly commanded her heart: "Be still, thou foolish one, and see to it that this sin be atoned for by a doubled love and care!"

A day or two later, Mistress Elsa met her husband on his return home with an impetuous embrace: "Philip, Catharine is a brave girl! She has conquered her heart; she is again all our own!"

CHAPTER VII.

CATHARINE IN DISTRESS; DR. MARTIN AT VARIANCE WITH HIS FRIENDS.

Somewhat more than a year had passed and already the autumn of the year 1524 had come and was undoing as usual the summer's labors. The wind was chasing the fallen leaves through the streets and on the roofs the swallows were consulting about taking their departure since the storks were already gone.

The people were streaming out of church at Wittenberg after Dr. Luther's sermon and groups of them in great excitement stood about in the market place. Among them we notice the syndic, Philip Reichenbach, deeply engaged in conversation with a richly dressed man

of distinguished appearance and stately bearing whose handsome face, every line of which showed the artist, was framed by an abundant and well kept beard falling almost to the waist. This was the court painter of the Elector of Saxony and councillor of Wittenberg, Lucas Cranach.

"I could not believe my own eyes!" exclaimed the syndic with an emphatic wave of the hand, "when Dr. Martin appeared in the pulpit in a black gown without his monk's cowl, and I was glad; for I have long disliked that cowl which was unsuitable for him. He is no longer a monk at heart, why should he wear the garb of one? The old cowl deserves rest, for it was threadbare and almost in pieces. I do not like it either that he should remain in the old monastery, since all the other monks, except the prior Eberhard Briser, have left it. It would be better for him to do away with every outward reminder of monkhood."

"Do not trouble yourself about that, my friend," returned Cranach. "It is well known that Dr. Martin does not regard the outward appearance. You must know that he has a good reason for remaining in the old convent since it is said the Elector will give it to him."

The syndic opened his eyes: "What? for himself? Will he receive such a gift?"

"Why not?" inquired Cranach. "Is it not a mark of high favor from the Elector?"

"Hm — hm! I have my own opinion about that," said Reichenbach half to himself. "There is the good Doctor all alone in that great, solitary house which is just going to ruin and without any woman to care for him. All that he teaches from the holy gospels is so clear and plain; he lives up to what he teaches so that we understand from his actions what otherwise we might not understand from his preaching. But it puzzles me that he should set marriage before his friends and monks as godly and right, and yet reject it for himself. Even to the Grand Master of the Teutonic Order, Albert of Brandenburg, he gave this advice: Lay aside the mantle of your order in which moths have made their

home; take a wife and proclaim yourself hereditary duke of Prussia! All this the noble lord has done to the great joy of Christians and especially of Luther himself. It is known that he urged the Archbishop of Mainz to follow the example of his cousin of Prussia. Now the Doctor's conduct perplexes his friends, either he is not in earnest in upholding the right of priests and monks to marry, if they will, or his courage fails him."

Lucas Cranach nodded assent: "I agree with you entirely and I heartily wish that Luther would change his mind on this point and take a wife not only on account of his friends and of the good cause, but for his own sake. If he goes on as he is doing now, we shall soon

sunk down half fainting, in his chair, pale as a ghost, and when I questioned him it came out that he had worked over his translation of the Psalms two days and two nights without food or drink. At night when he throws himself upon his couch, weary with the day's labor, there has been no one to shake up the pillows and it is a hard resting place. Oh, that God would incline his heart to choose a wife suited to him! Then he might live long and be of good courage! And yet," continued Cranach sighing, "where can he find a woman worthy of him?" He stopped and glanced over the swaying throng of people. "See," said he, pointing, "there is your wife with Fräulein Catharine. Is it true what I have been



have to weep over his coffin, and then God only knows what will become of us. He is prepared for death at any hour, and says the work will go on without him, for it is God's work, and He can make a Dr. Martin out of any willow twig. But I am of another opinion and say that God does not throw away his tools before the time, but makes use of them till his purpose is accomplished. Dr. Martin must not leave the world yet, there is too much to do, but he must have care to enable him to do it. If he had bones of iron and nerves of steel, he would sink under the load which he carries on his shoulders unless some faithful woman should be a helpmeet to him and provide for his comforts. Though he may forget the wants of the body when the spirit is absorbed in heavenly things, still it must have food and rest. I have found him

told that the pastor Dr. Caspar Glatz has asked her in marriage?"

Reichenbach's face grew clouded as he answered:

"You have touched there on a matter which troubles us. You know already that young Baumgärtner, who paid some court to Catharine, and succeeded in winning her regard, soon forgot her at Nuremberg and married the wife whom his father had chosen for him. It is not that which troubles me, however; I rather rejoice that it happened so, since Catharine now sees that I was right and that the young man was too fickle and lighthearted to be worthy of her. But this suit of Dr. Glatz causes me trouble. Luther urges it because he thinks that an escaped nun like Catharine should marry a pious priest. This pastor seems to me to be a worthy man and, if I must

part with Catharine I could not object to him, though it would cost me something to let her go. But since Herr Nicholas von Amsdorf came commissioned by Luther to approach her on behalf of Dr. Glatz, she is quite another woman. She listened to him in silence for some time, then began to weep bitterly, and at last sobbed out: 'Venerable sir, love cannot be commanded, it must be sent by God, and my heart is altogether cold towards the man whom you have chosen for me; how could I ever be to him what a Christian wife should be. Cease, then, to urge me, and leave me in peace; for I would rather remain single to the end of my days than marry Dr. Glatz.' When Amsdorf represented to her that such news might displease Dr. Luther, she began to tremble violently and broke out afresh into tears. At length she urgently entreated Amsdorf that he would not tell Dr. Martin of her refusal, since it might vex him, as she could never endure his displeasure—but she would herself open her heart to him whenever he should come. Ah well, Cranach, when Luther came to see us that same day there was a scene that moved us all to tears. Catharine fell at the Doctor's feet like a very Magdalen and spoke as I had never yet heard her speak, and the Doctor bent down as a father would to his child, laid his hand on her head and soothed her with gentle words, bidding her have no fear, he would not torment her further, but leave all to God. Later, when she had gone to her room the Doctor sat an hour with us, looking so grave and speaking so tenderly that it was easy to see Catharine's strait had moved him greatly. More than once, after sitting silent for some moments, he would say: 'Now I understand, good friends, why it is so hard for you to part with Catharine. She is indeed a treasure and a woman after God's heart. I reproach myself that I have hitherto thought so little about her, since I am her guardian and spiritual father.'—Since that day there is a great change in both; Catharine no longer keeps aloof shy and afraid when the Doctor is with us, but gladly talks to him, and asks him questions, and when he bestows a word of praise

upon her household diligence and womanly ways her face shows the pleasure that she feels."

Lucas Cranach, who had listened with much interest, replied:

"Yes, Catharine is indeed a worthy maiden, and the more I observe her conduct in your house, the more I admire and love her. I rejoiced like a child when the banished King of Denmark, who spent some time here, sent her a gold ring in recognition of her many virtues. But I would not that such high honor should make her proud."

"Do not fear," said Reichenbach, "her mind is not set on high things."

Thus talking the two men arrived at the Augustinian Convent, in which Luther lived. Two poor wayfarers were just coming out who had apparently been seeking aid from the Doctor, for in all Wittenberg no one was so beset by the poor and needy as the professor with a salary of twenty-two thalers and twelve groschen, and once when he had given his last coin, he did not hesitate to give the silver drinking cups which the Elector had presented to him as a mark of affection.

"Come, let us speak to the Doctor," said Cranach. "I must thank him for to-day's sermon."

They crossed the convent yard and passing through a long, dark entry, reached Luther's cell, where they found him at his table, deep in a pile of letters.

The Doctor greeted his guests heartily: "Welcome, good friends! You see here on the table some Sunday visitors, who take care that Dr. Martin shall have no rest even on the sweet Sabbath. And they all seem to be of one kind—recommendations to marriage. Yes, you may well stare; every-one to-day seems to urge that I should become a married man. There is first a letter from my good friend, Mistress Argula von Grumbach, a true servant of the Gospel, who presses me earnestly to confirm my teaching about the marriage of priests and monks by setting them a good example. There is another letter from Pastor Link at Altenburg. He announces to me the birth of a daughter and adds an exhortation to me not to delay to taste the

happiness of married life such as his. In a third letter, my old father takes up the strain and writes so touchingly, that I am almost constrained to rush into the streets and bring in the first maiden that I meet. Tell me, good friends, are not such letters cheerful Sunday visitors."

Reichenbach stood looking away absently, but Lucas Cranach answered very earnestly: "These are, it may be, messages from God to you, Martin."

"Oh," cried Luther, changing his tone, "now, perhaps I have chanced upon the man who plunged me into this broil."

"I would plunge you into no broil, but show your true happiness," returned Cranach in the same earnest manner. "Your friends will be greatly disappointed in you, if you hesitate longer to marry."

Luther shook his head, now almost covered with curling hair.

"Do my friends misunderstand me then, so much? Consider, Lucas. Of what I have said of the necessity and holiness of the marriage of priests I retract nothing nor will I ever swerve from it. I shall always uphold the holy estate of matrimony, for according to God's Word there is no more precious possession on earth than wedlock which God himself ordained, preserved and hallowed for all estates of men, since not only rulers, kings and priests are thus born, but even the eternal Son of God, though in a special manner. Yet I have not thought of taking a wife, as in the first place my enemies already make it a matter of reproach that I drink a glass of beer with my friends and play upon the lute, and call me a fop because I wear a gold ring and a shirt with wristlets; further to the slanders of the papists are added the reproaches of the Żwickau prophets, in whose name my former friend Carlstadt publishes a pamphlet 'Against the Lust of the Flesh in Wittenberg.' If I should marry what an outcry there would be, 'Oh, that is his Gospel; sensuality and the lust of the flesh!' Many of my friends doubt also as, for example, Dr. Hieronymus Schurf, who said lately: 'If this monk should take a wife, the devils would laugh and angels weep,' and Philip Melancthon, who was standing by,

added, 'Yes, truly, the papists are on the watch, for, should he do it, he himself would do more injury to his work, than the ban of the pope and the edict of the emperor could inflict! Besides all this, good friends, who could think of wooing a wife in such unsettled times as these, when the peasants are in revolt and convents and nunneries are burnt and innocent blood is shed on every side. Nor do I feel within me the smallest inclination to such a course. I am indeed in God's hands, as his creature, whose heart and mind he can change as he will, but my present thought is not to marry; not that I have no earthly passions, for I am neither wood nor stone, but my thoughts are otherwise directed seeing that I daily expect the doom of a heretic. Therefore I will neither do anything to hinder the fulfilment of God's will on me, nor will I harden my heart; yet I hope that He will not greatly prolong my days. As regards what I have written of the lawfulness of the marriage of priests, I will use no constraint nor impose a new yoke upon their necks as Carlstadt did, when he attempted to force all priests to marry, but allow freely to do either according to the will of the flesh."

Luther had spoken so warmly and decidedly, that Cranach did not venture to answer, but held out his hand to the Doctor, while his eyes mutely entreated forgiveness. Reichenbach, however, said calmly: "God will provide."

The two men then took their leave and Luther calling his servant Wolfgang, bade him read aloud the other letters, as he himself was very weary.

"Our Festival Year is a bulwark of Orthodoxy as real as our Confession of Faith." It is a bulwark, not defensively, but in that it brings the understanding and the heart into full and loving accord with that great Plan of Redemption, which, in its progressive developments and unfolding, reveals the perfections of the Divine Character; and at the same time touches all the deepest fountains of man's spiritual nature.—*Selected.*

A Norwegian Hymn.

O, little child ! lie still and sleep ;
 Jesus is near,
 Thou needst not fear ;
 No one need fear whom God doth keep
 By day or night ;
 Then lay thee down in slumber deep
 Till morning light.

O, little child ! thou needst not wake,
 Though bears should howl,
 The wolfish howl
 And watch-dogs' bark the silence break ;
 Jesus is strong :
 The angels watch thee for His sake,
 The whole night long.

O, little child ! be still and rest,
 He sweetly sleeps
 Whom Jesus keeps,
 And in the morning wakes so blest,
 His child to be ;
 Love every one, but love Him best,
 He first loved thee.

O, little child, when thou must die,
 Fear nothing then,
 But say " Amen "
 To God's command, and quiet lie
 In His kind hand
 Till He shall say, " Dear child, come, fly
 To Heaven's bright land."

Then, with thine angel wings quick grown,
 Thou shalt ascend
 To meet thy Friend ;
 Jesus the little child will own,
 Safe at His side ;
 And thou shalt live before the throne
 Because He died.

A PRIEST FOREVER.

Führich's drawing on the first page represents Christ as a Priest. In the 110th Psalm David speaks thus of the Messiah: "Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek." This Melchizedek was both king and priest of Salem. (Genesis xiv: 18). His name signified "Priest of Righteousness." His parents and origin are not mentioned in the Scriptures. He received honor even from Abraham. In these personal circumstances of his life he was a type of Christ. But the comparison between Christ as a High Priest and the priest-king Melchizedek extends much further, and is intended to show the excellency of the priesthood of Christ. It is perfect, whereas the Levitic priesthood was imperfect. It is an everlasting priesthood, unparalleled, and cannot be transferred, and is founded in the Divine holiness of Christ.

Jesus is not only a Priest but "after the order of Melchizedek." He is also a king; as such He will lead His hosts to certain victory.

THE EYE THAT SEES NOT ITSELF.

Gotthold continued thus: As the eye, the noblest organ of the human body, sees not itself, so in like manner true piety and godliness see not themselves.

True believers think not that they believe; the humble know not that they are humble; those who are most constant and earnest in prayer enjoy so much communion with their God, that they know not and think not how often and how earnestly they have prayed,—they think of God himself, and of the petitions which they have to ask, and have no time to think how devout they are; the kindest and most generous benefactors cannot remember that they have done any good at all, and are surprised when men thank them for their good deeds. The truly pious always think that they are not pious, and therefore are they ever striving, and praying, and seeking by every means to become so; and this constant inward warfare tends to their growth in holiness.

O my God, never have I greater reason for self-distrust than when I am most self-complacent; never have I more reason to be suspicious of the state of my soul, than when I am particularly well satisfied with myself, my faith, my prayers, and my alms.

To THE ILLUSTRATIONS. "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field." St. Matthew xiii: 44.

"The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way." St. Matthew xiii: 24, 25.

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THE CLEANSING OF THE TEMPLE.

For the convenience of the Jews who repaired to Jerusalem from a distance, and wished to offer sacrifices, the usage had grown of allowing booths to be set up, and stalls kept in the temple courts, where everything necessary for the purpose might be had; and as the half-shekel tribute, due from every adult male, and usually paid at that time, could only be received in Jewish money, the worshippers needed to exchange for it the Greek and Roman coins which were in general circulation, for which purpose the money-changers also were permitted to place their tables in the temple courts.

"These courts were thus made no bad emblem of the then existing state of the Hebrew theocracy. For though the custom had, in its origin, the excuse of public convenience, and the traffic had been at first conducted with that subdued decorum which the sacred place exacted, yet, from the progressing corruption of the people, many foul indecorums crept in; and the merchants and brokers, with the eager cupidity which had already become their characteristic, soon made everything subservient to their avarice; and their noisy toutings and keen huckstering not only defiled the sacred courts, but greatly disturbed those who came to worship at the temple."

It was into such a scene as this that Jesus came: it was to His Father's house—and that house defiled. He could not tolerate the iniquity He saw there—iniquity doubtless of a deeper dye than met the human eye, for He knew what was in man; and so, making a scourge of small cords, He drove out the chapmen and scattered their unholy wares. Jesus wrought for His Father—His charge against them was this: 'My Father's house shall be called a house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves.'

There are two points out of many which strike us here, on which we would briefly remark.

One of these is Christ's intolerance of evil, no matter what excuse man may make for it. These men might have made many and very fair-seeming excuses; if they were engaged in what was irreg-

ular, was it not for God's glory in the end? To be sure, they were not any the worse off themselves by the way; still it was for the convenience of God's worshippers, and, therefore, as they would have argued, for the benefit of His worship that they kept their stalls there. But Christ looked at the evil as evil, and not at something to be palliated by circumstances, and He drove them out.

And it is with evil, as such, that Jesus now also deals in the temples of our hearts. We are full of fair-seeming excuses, we wrap our evil up in so many coverings that we hide it even from ourselves; but his is root work; it is with the roots of things He has to do; it is with sin, as sin, irrespective of all surrounding circumstances; and the sin He must cast out. If we will have our hearts His Father's house, we must expect the presence of Christ in energy within them; we must expect to hear of much which we would allow there, 'Take these things hence.'

The other point which we would notice is that Christ wrought in zeal for His Father's glory. The one object before Him was 'The Father's house.' Zeal for the Father's glory will always characterize Christ's dealings with us. There are those who would continue in sin that grace may abound, but they would make God's mercy the destroyer of His holiness; and a house divided against itself cannot stand. It is for the Father's glory that His temple should be cleansed.

And so, when the cross is laid upon sin, and it is shown us that it must not only be expiated, but destroyed, we must not rebel; we must see that God cannot be honoured where there is the permitted abiding of iniquity; that after all, what the Saviour is doing is simply restoring the whole of our being to its original design—making it again our Father's house.

Let the reader of these few lines be well assured that in all Christ's dealings with him, He will keep a strict eye on His Father's glory; He has not forgotten how to use the scourge of small cords.

(Day of Rest.)

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CATHARINE VON BORA,

*The Wife of Martin Luther.**Translated from the German of Armin Stein, by M. Drisler.*CHAPTER VIII. — AN UNEXPECTED
RESOLUTION.

A sorrowful, anxious day dawned upon the world, January 1st, 1525. More and more darkly loomed the clouds which since the previous October had been gathering on the horizon, and now seemed heavily charged with thunder and lightning. In Thuringia, Franconia and Suabia the flames of revolt had long been smouldering among the oppressed peasants, and Luther's proclamation of Christian liberty had fallen among them like a spark among dry fuel and kindled a flame which startled the world.

In truth, Luther, in whom they placed their trust, had taken up the cause of the unhappy peasants and with a prophet's tongue had urged the nobles to concede to the peasants what they asked in the twelve articles, as their demands were just, and peace might be quickly concluded if the nobility would exercise a wise and far seeing humanity. But as Luther's warning remained fruitless, and the nobles only hardened themselves in their pride, the storm broke forth.

Beginning in the Black Forest the seditious movement swept on, gathering force like an avalanche through all Suabia, Franconia and Thuringia. Everywhere castles and convents were burned, and the blood of innocent victims cruelly slaughtered cried to heaven. Urged on by the Zwickauer prophets, the peasants seemed possessed by a frantic desire to kill, like the thirst of a tiger when he has tasted blood, and princes and nobles trembled before them.

Luther was grieved and wounded to the heart. With undaunted courage he twice ventured into the midst of the disturbance, if through the power of his words he might restrain the incendiaries, but this time his voice was powerless, and sorrowfully returning to Wittenberg he published his pamphlet "Against the Peasant Robbers and Murderers," and called upon the princes to begin a war

of defence against them. The princes took up arms and marched against the disorganized bands of robbers with disciplined troops which soon defeated the rabble, and to Luther's fresh sorrow the victors wreaked bloody vengeance upon the wearers of the smock.

Throughout the country the bells were ringing for joy, and men's hearts were glad, but Luther sat alone and sorrowful in his cell. He neither ate nor drank, nor did he sleep, but sat with bowed head, sighing deeply. He had much cause, for every man's hand was against him. The partisans of Rome loaded him with curses: "You are the man whose godless proclamation of freedom burst the chains of slavery and brought on the deluge of blood!" The peasants cursed him no less: "It is you who have deceived, betrayed and abandoned us!" And his friends? They stood aloof, timid and frightened. And the Gospel? Alas! it seemed that its cause was lost! In these sore straits to fill up the measure came the sad news from Torgau that the prince whose wisdom and strength of character had made him a steadfast defender of the faith had departed this wicked world on the fifth of May. Oh, heavy news! Must all now again be dark after so glorious a Gospel dawn? Wilt Thou, O Lord, thus reject thy faithful servant who as a hero has begun his work!

There was questioning and complaint in Wittenberg: Where is Luther? His pulpit was silent, his students found a vacant chair. There he sits—alone in his cell—no one, not even his servant dare intrude upon him. He sits profoundly thinking, dead to the world, absorbed in the inner world of prayer and meditation. It was ever thus with him when deeply moved. So had he sat when he wrestled with the resolution to speak out the truth to the pope and to the whole world and to begin the struggle with the superstition of Rome.

Luther, what is in thy mind? Is thine the prophet's sigh: It is enough; now, O Lord take away my life! Is this silence doubt of thyself or of thy mission?

No, that cannot be; it is a conflict, a strife worthy of a hero. See, he prays! Oh, now the spirit has found the help it needed, and see! the dejected eyes sparkle again, the clouded brow is clear, a holy consolation speaks from that upward glance, and with quick decision he leaves his cell and goes towards the house of one of his dearest friends, Lucas Cranach, the painter, and knocks at the door. The master was in his workshop busied at his easel with a portrait of Bugenhagen, the pastor. At the entrance of Luther he let fall the brush in joyful terror, and hastened toward him with open arms: "Friend Martin! God be praised that we have you again! We were most anxious about you, it is four days already since we saw you; but how strange you look, Martin! What has moved you, that your face shines as with some great thought?"

Luther looked earnestly at his friend and answered quietly: "Call Dr. Bugenhagen and Dr. Apel, the advocate, that you may unite with them in showing me a kindness."

Cranach willingly sent for the two men who soon appeared, rejoicing no less than the painter to see their friend again.

"Dear friends," said Luther, "a change has come over me which will greatly astonish you. I will not keep you in suspense, but tell you frankly God has said to me: 'Brother Martin, go take a wife!'"

His hearers were startled and unable to speak, but looked anxiously at the Doctor, who continued calmly: "Yes, this is from the Lord as it were a miracle before mine eyes; therefore is my soul full of trust."

"The Lord be praised," cried Lucas Cranach, who was the first to collect himself, "Brother Martin, this is God's will and an answer to my secret prayers. But tell us which of the daughters of the land you have chosen?"

"Her name is Catharine von Bora," answered Luther in his full clear tones.

Another pause and then the three men warmly seized and shook the Doctor's hand: "This is from God," cried Cranach, "for of all women whom I know she is best fitted to be wife to a prophet of the Lord."

Bugenhagen also expressed his satisfaction at the choice, while Cranach hastily left the room and soon returned with his wife. There were tears in Mistress Barbara's eyes as she approached the Doctor and offered him her hand.

"The Lord bless you," said she with emotion, "blessed be the woman of your choice. Oh, we thank God who has granted you such grace and after a night of sorrow has given you such a sunrise of gladness. Ah! Doctor you have always spoken many worthy things of holy matrimony, but now you will learn that there is more in that high estate than words can tell."

A servant now entered with a decanter of wine and four silver goblets: "Sit down, good friends," entreated Cranach, "that our minds may grow calmer."

While Mistress Barbara filled the goblets with the sparkling Spanish wine, the three men drew up the red velvet chairs and sat down.

"But now tell us, Brother Martin," began Cranach rubbing his hands with pleasure, "what has wrought this great change in you, for I have never hoped that you would take such a course."

Luther drank a little wine and answered: "Man proposes and God disposes, and who is able to kick against the pricks? I thought first of my enemies, and of the reproaches they continually heap upon me, but that is a fine hero who urges others to marry and does not venture to do it himself. I will therefore defy the devil and his troops, and in spite of princes and bishops will take a wife and set a seal upon this despised and rejected estate of matrimony. And this will I do quickly, that I may have time to confirm my teaching by my deed, for the times are so evil that my end may be near. I will therefore speedily complete my marriage that death may find me in this state should it be merely a union like that of Joseph. In the second place, I thought of my old father and his grief

when I went into a convent in disobedience to his wishes. Now I will atone for this sin and comply with his repeatedly expressed wish that I may say to him: 'See father, Martin has a wife; be at peace then and rejoice with him.' In the third place, I thought of my friends who are so backward and timid about marrying because Luther has not done it. Thus, though after my death my teachings may soon be suppressed, I will at least confirm them by my example."

"Happy Catharine!" cried Mistress Barbara, forgetting herself in her delight, "thou art blessed among women, the lines have fallen to thee in pleasant places!"

"Does she suspect your intention?" asked Dr. Apel.

"Truly," said Luther, "I have visited her oftener of late, and have observed with pleasure her worth, her household ways and her true nobility of soul. Yet I am no youthful lover, and my heart beats entirely as should that of a man past forty, although I love Catharine truly. It may well be that she has no suspicion of what is to happen to-day, yet I think that she will not deny me. I have asked you, dear friends, to go with me in order that my betrothal thus witnessed may have due force in the eyes of the world."

"That is a joyful errand, a man does not have many such!" cried Cranach joyously. "But, Martin, why do you do this so secretly? Now Melancthon—"

"Not a word of him!" cried Luther, hastily. "He and some of my other friends are timid, and maintain that my whole work would fail should I take a wife and especially one who had been a nun. Therefore, all must be done quietly, lest Satan should stir up confusion and strife through the evil speech of friends as well as of enemies."

Meantime Dr. Apel sat buried in thought. Now he raised his head and with a slightly perplexed smile turned to Luther: I rejoice, like others, but one doubt perplexes me, whether Catharine, worthy of you in heart and soul, is your equal in intellect, whether she will always meet your needs, for she has not brought much learning with her from

the convent. Pardon me that I venture to express such a thought."

Luther's eyes kindled at once; "Ah, Apel, why does Master Philip Melancthon love his wife so dearly and think his home a temple of happiness, but because he looked not for a learned, but only for a beloved wife? A learned woman is like a gadfly which dazzles by its brilliancy, but carries a sting. What a man desires, and what makes marriage happy, is a pious, modest woman, lowly in spirit, with a heart full of love and a hand skilful to guide the house."

A grateful look from Mistress Barbara repaid the Doctor for this speech.

"Let us go in God's name," urged Cranach, taking up his cap and mantle.

The men left the house in silence, and Mistress Barbara made after them the sign of the holy cross.

* * * * *

In the entrance hall the wife of the syndic sat with Catharine von Bora peeling turnips. "Is it true," asked the latter, that the new elector declared on his accession that he would earnestly and zealously defend the faith?"

Mistress Elsa assured her it was even so. "In his brother's lifetime he repeatedly expressed himself in a very friendly way to Dr. Martin, and paid him much respect."

Catharine's eyes sparkled with satisfaction: "Honor to whom honor is due. See, the great Doctor towers head and shoulders above all the people, and emperor, kings and princes must bow down before him."

Mistress Elsa smiled at the enthusiasm which kindled Catharine's glance at every mention of Luther's name, and turned the conversation.

"Would you rather work here in the kitchen or put away the spun flax in the chest up stairs?"

"Do what you will, I will undertake the other," returned Catharine.

There was a knock at the door and as Catharine opened it, Luther, Cranach Bugenhagen and Apel entered. Their greeting was so grave that, missing their usual friendly manner, she stood aside wondering.

The four men next approached Mistress

Elsa whose heart began to beat anxiously at the formality of the first words :

"Will you allow me," began Luther, "in your presence and before these honorable men to speak to Catharine von Bora on an important matter?"

With looks that uneasily questioned in turn Luther and the three men standing a little in the background, Mistress Elsa made a sign to Catharine who with still more anxious heart drew near.

"Dear Catharine," said Luther, "you know well how much your fate has interested me, and how I have sought a worthy husband for you that you may fulfil your vocation by entering into the married state. Yet my endeavors have till to-day been without success which has caused me much anxiety: The proverb says: 'All good things come in threes;' so to-day I come to ask you —"

Catharine clasped her hands anxiously and strove to speak, but found no words.

"Do not fear, dear Catharine," continued Luther in his gentle tones. "I come not to-day on behalf of another, but as God has showed me after a long struggle that I should not longer delay to crown my words by my act, and my heart told me, without any considering, who, of all maidens, was the most worthy, I ask you now, before God, and in the presence of these men, if you are willing to take Dr. Martin Luther for your lawful husband?"

A deep silence fell upon all. The three men in the background stood without movement. Mistress Elsa gazed at the Doctor with eyes and mouth wide open. And Catharine? She trembled from head to foot, grasped at the nearest chair to keep herself from falling, while every drop of blood forsook her face and her heart seemed suddenly to stop beating. Thus she stood for two long minutes, then, raising her hands to heaven and forgetting all around her, her lips trembling with joy, breathed forth:

"Lord, Thou knowest that I asked from Thee but to serve him as his hand-maiden. And now shall I be his lawful wife? Lord, overwhelm me not with Thy mercies!"

Mistress Elsa sobbed aloud, and Luther, deeply moved, seized Catharine's hand:

"Wilt thou, then, be mine till death?"

"I will," whispered the young girl in tones trembling with joy, while maidenly shame sent the blood back from her heart to the now glowing cheeks, so that never in her life had she looked more beautiful than in this moment of supreme earthly happiness. Then the great Doctor bent down to her and gave her the kiss of betrothal.

On the evening of this day the windows of the upper story of Reichenbach's house shone brightly, and in the large parlor with the two pillars a joyous company was assembled. Before an altar adorned with flowers and brilliant with waxlights knelt Luther and Catharine von Bora, while round about them a circle of their nearest friends prayed with folded hands as Luther thus spoke in a tone of deepest emotion:

"Heavenly Father! Thou who hast raised me up to the glory of Thy name and service, and wilt grant me also the name of father, grant me Thy mercy and bless me that I may godly rule and cherish my wife, my children and my household. Grant me wisdom and strength to govern and guide them aright, and give me a heart and spirit to walk in the ways of Thy commandments, through Jesus Christ. Amen."

"Amen," came the answer from the kneeling circle, and Dr. Bugenhagen advancing put a ring on the finger of each of the betrothed and blessed them in the name of the holy Trinity.

This took place on the Tuesday in Trinity Week, June 13th, 1525.

CHAPTER IX.—A DAY OF REJOICING.

The daws which lived in the old gray walls of the Augustinian convent of Wittenberg put their heads out of their nests and wondered at the noise and bustle in so quiet a house. They were accustomed to fly about the convent yard, and hold their meetings there without fear, but now they were frightened by the men who came and went, busily bringing all kinds of furniture which could not be suitable for a convent. They

wondered still more that the good monk who had fed them every day and of whom they were not at all afraid, but, on the contrary, always hopped up to confidently, should have ceased to care about them, so that they were obliged to fly away into the country and seek their food elsewhere.

There was indeed a stir in the lonely old building. The plump, buxom little Mistress Elsa bustled in and out so full of zeal that often she stumbled over a stone through not taking heed to her steps. The large room in the rear with windows looking out on the court was newly whitewashed and prettily furnished under her directions. Every day she came to watch the progress of the work, and feasted her eyes on the cosy home that was being prepared for her beloved Catharine in the gloomy old convent. But each time she carefully turned the key behind her. — Catharine should know nothing till Luther brought her home, and this was to be on June 27th. Till then, Catharine would remain in the house of her benefactor.

The nearer the day came, the more the work was urged on, and good Mistress Elsa saw with joy how one vied with another in showing the love and reverence they felt for Doctor Martin, and her eyes overflowed with tears when one day a poor widow on crutches brought a hen with six little chickens, saying that was all she had, but she must bring something to the man who, as once the Saviour had done to the widow of Nain, gave back her only son from the grave, for Doctor Martin had opened the convent gates and restored a beloved son to the poor mother.

Others came bringing gifts for kitchen and cellar, so that Mistress Elsa had trouble to conceal all the stores. A few days before the feast, four beadles came and brought from the Stadtrath a present for Dr. Luther "towards housekeeping," namely a cask of Eimbeck beer and 20 Schreckenbergs silver gulden, also a piece of Suabian linen for Mistress Luther, together with a written promise to furnish the newly married couple with wine for their table for one year. This was a special token of gratitude as the Stadt-

rath had already sent a present on the wedding day, consisting of a gallon of Malmsey, a gallon of Rhine wine and six quarts of Franconian wine.

On the next day, the University sent as a gift to their great teacher a large silver goldlined goblet and cover in repoussé work having on its base this inscription:

"Presented to Dr. Martin Luther and his wife Catharine von Bora, on the Tuesday after the Feast of St. John the Baptist, 1525 A. D., in honor of their marriage."

While the syndic's wife was still engaged in arranging all the wedding presents in the room prepared for them, and murmuring to herself, "What will the Doctor say, he who so strenuously forbade all wedding gifts, when he sees so many tokens of love—a wagon drove into the yard and two of the elector's servants lifted from it with difficulty a wild boar and two roebucks. The two men delivered to Mistress Elsa a greeting from the court preacher Spalatinus for Dr. Luther, and in her joy the good woman was almost ready to kiss the bearer.

Meanwhile the Doctor sat in his quiet cell and wrote his last letter announcing his marriage. Many had already been sent to distant friends, first of all to his old parents in Mansfeld, then to his three noble friends in Mansfeld, Dr. Johannes Rühel, Johannes Dürr and Caspar Müller, next to his friend Spalatinus in Altenburg and to the pastor there, Wenzel Link, to the pastor Amsdorf at Magdeburg and Master Caspar Adler. Now he was writing to one whom he had nearly forgotten, and who should have been invited first of all, as but for him Luther would never have seen his Catharine, Leonhard Koppe of Torgau.

"Dear Father Prior," wrote he playfully, "You know what has come to pass, that the nun whom you, with God's help, took away from a convent two years ago, is now about to enter a convent, not, indeed, to take the veil but to act the part of a true wife to Dr. Luther who has lived so long alone in the empty old Augustinian monastery at Wittenberg. God has been pleased to show a wonder and to set at naught equally me and the

vain world. Come, then, to my home on the Tuesday after St. John the Baptist's day, and come without any wedding gift!"

The longed-for day came at last. All Wittenberg was in a state of joyful excitement, and many fervent prayers went up to heaven. Within the convent sat a goodly company at table with Dr. Martin, and at his side Catharine listened in silent happiness to what was said by the guests in praise of the newly married pair and to what her husband said in reply.

All was to her like a dream. She felt as if she had been raised from the condition of a maid servant to that of a queen, for that he who sat beside her was a king in intellect was proved, not only by the praise of his friends but by the deadly hatred of his enemies. And she, poor Catharine von Bora, was to live nearer to the great man than his dearest friend, nearer than Melancthon, than Cranach, than Bugenhagen, than Jonas! She pressed her hands upon her heart lest it should burst for joy, and often she raised her eyes to heaven with the secret prayer: "Lord, keep me ever humble; let not pride enter my soul."

Notwithstanding all the joy, however, which lighted up Luther's countenance, there was about him a certain uneasiness and more than once he whispered to Catharine: "There is an end of my hopes! God has denied me this one wish lest my happiness should be too great."

Catharine understood him, and pressed his hand beneath the table in sign of sympathy.

They had been seated at table above an hour, when the student John Pfister, who acted as cup-bearer, entered and announced that two peasants, a man and a woman, were without asking to see Dr. Martin.

Luther started and gave orders to show them in at once.

Then appeared in the doorway two old people, in the dress of Mansfeld peasants, who at the sight of the distinguished company stood confounded and drooped their heads as if dazzled.

Luther, who had already risen from his place, made his way to them keeping close by the wall. As he came near, the old woman raised her arms and stretched them towards him: "Martin, my son!" At the word he fell upon her neck and wept aloud, but soon disengaging himself, turned to greet his father who stood by unable to utter a word: "Dearest Father! you are welcome a thousand times, for I have longed to see you that I might know if you had taken your disobedient son to your heart again. God has led me in a wonderful manner, and we ought to praise Him Who brings to pass what He will."

Then, turning, Luther pointed to Catharine, who meantime had approached them, "See, father, this is your daughter!"

The old man's knees trembled, and, raising his hands to heaven, he cried:

"Now I can die since my eyes have seen this day! Dear Martin, you are indeed again my son, and Hans Luther is the happiest of fathers!"

The wedding guests crowded around, greeting the old couple to whom was assigned the place of honor at the table next to the bride and groom, and Doctor Martin spoke:

"My joy is now complete! I had asked of God this one grace before all others that on this day I might see my beloved parents face to face and He has heard me. This I will take as a special mark of His favor and will praise Him for it my whole life."

THE WORD OF GOD

is a martyr on earth. For centuries it has blessed, comforted and revived all Christendom and accompanied many men in their life journey, from the cradle to the grave, and yet it is despised, per-

secuted, suppressed and hated. Yes, men will even pervert it and presume to find fault with it and alter it according to their own fancy.

Whence does this come? The Saviour



Dr. Apel.

Mrs. Cranach.

Reichenbach.

Cranach.

Dr. Bugenhagen.

LUTHER'S WEDDING.

says that the Word of God is a seed. Even the best seed cannot prosper, even the best sower can raise nothing if the land is not good.—This is the reason.—The field is the world, the great world as high as the clouds, but also the little world in man's heart. Every word of God is a seed corn which the heavenly sower scatters, and He is not to be blamed if the divine seed brings no fruit; the fault lies with us.

The parable of the different places where the seed fell is a picture of our hearts. No one ought to look in vain into this mirror.

God's Word must not fall on the way-side. He should give it not only an open ear but also an open heart. The devil lets loose his birds that they may eat up this seed. These are the diversions which will let nothing serious reach the heart. Woe to the thoughtless glitter and flutter-

life, which the black flock of birds carry to the gravel! So man becomes worse and more carnal, and having sown to the flesh he must at last reap corruption.

God's Word must not fall on stony places. Even if it gets a little root and springs up quickly, it is nevertheless in vain if it is not deeply rooted. A few strokes of the sun, and it withers away. The most abundant hearing does not take the place of an *inner life*. A passing emotion is by no means a *sincere repentance*, and the best resolutions are unable to break self-will. To do that, other strength than our own is needed. How much of self in the heart, how many stony places, and these will not permit a single shoot of the good seed to take root there. He that does not seek Jesus only, Him only, will not survive persecution, the heat of temptation, the scorn of the world, the loss of earthly good. In him, God's word soon





in the heart excepting only the one thing needful. There is no use in being a believer if one cannot tear oneself loose from these things. These thorns are no trifles, as we often flatter ourselves that they are. How much of God's word is daily killed by the thorn bush! Where thorns grow luxuriantly there is a rapid downward course. Often, it is true, this course is only gradually downward, so that the miserable man swerves hither and thither between God and the world and has many painful contests because he cannot take a firm hold and say "out with the thorns."

This, then, is the field, the heart of man—the wayside, the rock, the thorny place—the same everywhere in all the world, under silk and satin or under a simple jacket. The riddle is solved, why the heavenly sower accomplishes so little with His good seed, why the abundant sowing brings so little fruit. For it must be confessed that we have God's word in abundance, written und spoken, in the Scriptures

fades away even though it sprung up ever so freshly, and at the time when it should put forth buds, it is completely withered. He remains a wordly-minded Christian, of whom we have so many.

Finally, God's Word must not fall among thorns. Where thorns are hidden, the heart is not clean and an evil undergrowth is there. Cares and riches and pleasures of this life, seeking after that which is in the world choke the growing seed of God and bind fast the soul. All possible things are allowed to live

and in the pulpit, in schools and in daily life, at home and in the church, in poems and pictures, in the history of the past and in the richly endowed witnesses of our own generation.

It is only necessary that every one should examine his own heart and see why it brings forth so little fruit, and what for the time being prevents the seed from growing. Many a one has remained wayside and rock, others are no longer such by any means, but from the loosened soil of their hearts grow

nothing but weeds. Hence, there is need of daily watching and prayer.

A good soil is needed for God's seed if it shall flourish and ripen. Every heart could and should become and continue good ground. To him who sincerely desires, the Lord gives the power to accomplish. This is the most precious attribute of the heavenly Sower that he has power to change completely even the stony places and to make good ground of every heart. The Spirit of the Lord must come over us and abide with us, who will enable us to search the

conscience every day and to maintain an open warfare against our own hearts. Such good ground is a Sanctuary. If it be watched with care, the Divine seed will become deeply rooted and will bring forth a good fruit, the fruit of the Spirit. Then love, joy, peace, patience, faith, meekness and purity will grow together, then a man passes through the sorrows of earth and becomes ripe for the harvest, and for the most delightful joys of harvest, for he beareth precious seed and bringeth his sheaves with him.

(From the German.)

HILDA, THE SAXON MAID.

TRANSLATED BY A. L. YOUNT.

Opposite the town of Schleswig stands a very old church built out of massive stones. This church is noted on account of its builder. *Ansgar*, the missionary of the North, is said to have built it. He was born in France, A. D. 801, became a monk, and in obedience to the call of the German emperor went as missionary to Denmark. He also went to Sweden and labored there some years. In 854 he came to Hamburg, built a church, established schools, and educated young men, whom he purchased out of slavery, and prepared them to preach the gospel.

King *Harald* of Denmark was a heathen. When he was driven from his throne by his enemies, in 814, he came to the German Emperor, Ludwig the Pious, for protection. The latter proposed to help him retake his kingdom on condition that he would spread the Christian religion throughout his country. To this Harald consented, and both himself and family were baptized at Mainz A. D. 826.

In the garb of an emperor he then returned to Denmark. *Ansgar* accompanied him as the messenger of the gospel. The leaders of Saxony met together to greet the returning King. Clad in full uniform, their long hair streaming in locks upon their shoulders, their swords hanging on their right and their shields on the left, they proceeded with uncovered heads into the presence of the King.

Maidens in long garments bore the images of their gods in front of the procession. Next followed the hoary headed chief, *Ethelrich*. By his side was his fifteen-year-old daughter, *Hilda*. King Harald came near. The leaders of Saxony begged his pardon for their previous unfaithfulness, and pledged him their obedience and support. The King, like a noble Christian prince, promised them pardon. Then he pointed to *Ansgar*, who in the garments of a priest, with a crucifix in hand, accompanied the King and said: "Saxons, here stands the priest of the God whom I now serve and to whom I wish to lead you. I command you to take this priest into your city, and let him teach you the faith.—*Ethelrich*, chief of the brave Saxon tribe, I make you answerable for any harm done to this priest. *Ethelrich*, come forward and bow down before the image of his and my God, which he bears." At this word there went a low murmur through the ranks of the Saxons. Then suddenly a hand drew back the old chief. *Hilda*, his daughter, stepped up before him, and in an angry tone said: "Father, will you bow your head before strange gods? Will you faithlessly forsake the gods of your fathers? The grey headed chief was terrified. But Harald drew his sword from its scabbard and cried in anger: "Get down upon your knees, or I will pierce you through on the spot." *Ethelrich* remained defiantly standing.

Then Ansgar stepped forward and said: "Let it be so, mighty prince; I did not come to shed blood, but to declare the gospel of peace. Christ conquers not with the sword, but with the power of His love." Then he turned to the assembly, and said: "Go in peace." The pronouncement of this pious benediction made a deep impression. The Saxons promised to let him live among them. From that time on Ansgar preached the gospel among them, and soon gathered a small congregation. It was Hilda who strengthened her father in his enmity towards the new faith. But still the merciful God called her to be His disciple. Ansgar won her respect. She heard his sermons from time to time, and the wonderful word moved her heart and filled her soul. But her father remained an enemy of the gospel. Nevertheless he kept his promise, and suffered no harm to come to Ansgar.

Now suddenly a storm broke out, which threatened to wipe out at one stroke all this work of faith. King Harald, who had received baptism, fell from Christianity. He notified the leaders of the Saxons that he had returned to the old faith of their fathers. Then Ethelrich called together all the chief men belonging to his district. In a room of his house, decorated with the images of heathen gods, the assembly met, under the dingy pine torch. The wrath of these heathen broke out in hot flames. A resolution was passed declaring that the Christians must be exterminated. Hilda learned at once of this decision. At the dead of night she betook herself to the house of the priest. The congregation was gathered in the church for worship. Hilda rushed in, and said: "*Ansgar, flee, flee, yet this night!*" She then related what had transpired in her father's house. But Ansgar could not be so soon moved to flee. Hilda asked to be received into church yet that night through Holy Baptism. Her request was complied with, and she was led to the font. At that moment there were heard outside the church blows and a wild hideous noise. The Christians fled from their seats in consternation, and gathered around their beloved teacher at the

altar. Admission was demanded in the name of Ethelrich, the chief. The men became pale, and the women cried. Ansgar alone remained calm and reminded the congregation of their vow, to suffer and die for their Saviour. The hideous cries before the church became silent. The congregation begged Ansgar to flee. He promised to do so. Then he turned to Hilda and baptized her in the name of the Triune God. Suddenly there was a crash in the rear of the altar. The whole wall behind the altar tumbled down, and the red flames of fire dashed into the church.—Against a remaining beam of the hinder wall leaned a high ladder. On the same were seen the wild figures of the barbarous heathens, who with devilish joy and enraged hatred gazed upon the congregation. The doors had been fastened from the outside. The flames with cracking noise licked along the walls. In a short time the house of God broke in upon the dying Christians. One smoking pile of rubbish covered the whole band. Only that one beam behind the altar was still standing. The ladder still leaned against it. A man still stood upon one of the upper rounds. It was Ethelrich. The old chief himself had helped to set fire to the church. He himself had ascended the ladder to witness the death of the hated Christians. But as he beheld his much beloved daughter at the baptismal font, despair seized his heart. The fire had already taken hold of Hilda's clothing, and then the falling beams enveloped everything in thick smoke. Ethelrich stood staring at the place where he had seen his daughter. And when by force his companions threw the old man off from the ladder, he had lost his eyesight, and was led away a blind man. His strength, too, was broken, and with trembling knees he staggered along. Ansgar escaped as by a miracle. He went to Sweden. In A.D. 850 he again returned, and built on the same spot where the wooden church had stood, which was burned, the stone church, which stands to this day. As bishop of Hamburg and Bremen, he entered into the joy of his Lord, February 3d, 865.

(Our Church Paper.)

THE PAINTER OF THE REFORMATION.

This is the appellation usually bestowed on Lucas Cranach, the friend of Luther, the painter of the portraits of many of the Reformers and German princes who favored the Reformation. Saxony had no original school of art. Cranach, the chief of its painters, was a native of Cranach, a village in Franconia. His family name was Suder, and the year of his birth was 1472.

Dr. Waagen says that Cranach's teacher was probably Matthew Grunewald. The ground of this supposition is in the resemblance of style. Cranach, though inferior to Grunewald in grandeur of conception and thoroughness of execution, excels him in richness and variety of invention. His pictures are not so finished, but they are more popular. The same critic says, that Cranach seized the great doctrine of Luther and Melancthon,—the insufficiency of good works and the sole efficacy of faith in Christ,—and tried to embody it in the form of art. The pictures in which this is specially done, are one of a dying man, preserved in the town museum of Leipsic; another on the fall and the redemption of man, in the ducal gallery of Gotha; and a large altar-piece in the church of the town of Schneeberg, in Saxony. Some of his Scripture subjects are mentioned as being among Cranach's best productions, particularly that of the woman taken in adultery, in the Munich gallery; and another of Christ receiving little children, in the gallery of Thomas Baring, Esq., of London; and of Sampson and Delilah, in the royal gallery of Augsburg.

The great excellence of Cranach as a painter lay in his realism. A stag hunt, in the collection of Lord Taunton, at Stoke, is described as of the first class. His portraits, too, are remarkable; three mentioned are Albrecht, Elector of Mayence, John Friederich, the Generous, and John, the Constant. The altar-piece of Weimar was one of his latest works, and is generally considered his best. It is purely a Reformation picture, and embodies the Reformation idea of Christ alone, with nothing coming

between Him and every individual man. Christ on the Cross is the central figure. To the right are Luther and Cranach, with John the Baptist directing them to the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world. On the left Christ again appears, triumphing over Satan, who is driving sinners into the gulf of fire.

Cranach was also a skilful engraver. The subjects of a series of drawings for wood-cutting show that he took an ardent interest in the Reformation struggles. He was employed by both the successors of Frederick the Wise, and he shared for a few years the captivity of Frederick the Generous, after the battle of Mühlberg. In Wittenberg he was twice elected Burgomaster, once in 1537, and again in 1540.

Dr. Waagen concludes his account of Cranach in these words:—"The long life of the painter, and the rapidity of his brush, which was such as to obtain for him the title of "*Celerrimus pictor*" on his gravestone, will account for the very large number of pictures which he executed. Nevertheless, of the works bearing his name, many are the production of his son, Lucas Cranach the younger, of whom I have more to say; also probably of another son, called Johann Lucas, who died at an early age in Italy. A large remainder are by less skilful and often by spiritless and mechanical journeymen. Among the pictures thus manufactured may be included a large number of small portraits of Luther, Melancthon, and of the Elector Frederick the Wise, and John Constant, which bear the date 1532. By allowing, however, his monogram to be inscribed on these works, Lucas Cranach himself contributed to lower his reputation with succeeding generations. Although Schuchardt may be right in maintaining that an altar-piece in the church at Wittenberg, assigned to Lucas Cranach, was little if it all touched by his hands, but is only one of the better productions of his workshop, yet the composition, which at all events proceeded from him, is too remarkable not

to be mentioned here. The centre represents the Last Supper, and is peculiar in its arrangement; for the disciples, with heads of renowned character, are seated round a circular table. On the right wing is painted the Sacrament of Baptism, administered by Melancthon, in presence of an assistant and three sponsors. A group of richly-dressed women, as spectators, stand in the foreground. A peculiar but pleasing tone of feeling pervades the whole. The left wing representing confession, is superior to the former picture. In the confession we recognize the portrait of Bugenhagen who, with serene dignity, absolves a kneeling penitent (a citizen) with the key in his right hand, whilst at the same time, with the one in his left, he motions back a warrior who has drawn near with a haughty rather than a repentant air, and whose hands are still fettered. On the predella is a fourth painting with smaller figures; in the centre is the image of Christ crucified; on one side a pulpit from which Luther preaches in front of a graceful and simple group of listening maidens and women with children, and deeper in the picture is a fine group of serious men and youths. The work is at once a representation of the most remarkable rite of the Protestant Church, and a memorial of the most honored teachers of Holy Writ.'

(Day of Rest.)

A BRAVE LITTLE DAUGHTER.

The following story is told by Miss Strickland, in her "Queens of England," of a little girl who saved her father's life:

"It was in the time of Queen Mary, and Lord Preston, the father of the child, was condemned to death for conspiring to bring back the exiled King James to the throne. Her name was Lady Catherine Graham, and she was only nine years of age. The poor child was, during the trial of her father, left in the Queen's apartments in Windsor Castle. The day after the condemnation of Lord Preston, the Queen found the little Lady Catherine in St. George's gallery, gazing earnestly on the whole-

length picture of James II., which still remains there. Struck with the mournful expression of the young girl's face, Mary asked her hastily what she saw in that picture which made her look on it so particularly. 'I was thinking,' said the innocent child, 'how hard it is that my father must die for loving yours.' The story goes that the Queen, pricked in conscience by this artless reply, immediately signed the pardon of Lord Preston, and gave the father back to the child."

NEEDLES' EYES.

In Oriental cities there are in the large gates small and very low apertures, called metaphorically "needle's-eyes," just as we talk of windows on ship-board as "bull's eyes." These entrances are too narrow for a camel to pass through them in the ordinary manner, or even if loaded. When a loaded camel has to pass through one of the entrances, it kneels down, its load is removed, and then it shuffles through on its knees. "Yesterday," writes Lady Duff Gordon from Cairo, "I saw a camel go through the eye of a needle—that is, the low, arched door of an inclosure. He must kneel, and bow his head, to creep through; and the rich man must thus humble himself." This explains the meaning of the passage in the New Testament, "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."

ANECDOTE.

Little four year old Clarence often rhymes his sentences. One day something had displeased his father at the dinner table. The little fellow did not enjoy the stern silence, and putting down his knife and fork, laid his hand on his papa's, and with a bright smile on his own face, exclaimed persuasively:

"Oh dear Pappy,
Do be happy!"

The frown vanished in an instant, and dinner was eaten by all with a happy relish.

A Polish Even-Song.

"The stars shine forth from the blue sky;
How great and wondrous is God's might!
Shine, stars, through all eternity,
His witness in the night.

"O Lord, Thy tired children keep;
Keep us who know and feel Thy might;
Turn Thine eye on us as we sleep,
And give us all good-night.

"Shine, stars, God's sentinels on high,
Proclaimers of His power and might;
May all things evil from us fly—
O stars, good-night, good-night!"

(Fraser's Magazine.)

THE KING AND THE MILLER.

Near Sans Souci, the favorite residence of Frederick the Great, there was a mill which much interfered with the view from the palace. One day the king sent to inquire what the owner would take for the mill; and the unexpected reply came that the miller would not sell it for any money. The king, much incensed, gave orders that the mill should be pulled down. The miller made no resistance, but folding his arms, quietly remarked:

"The king may do this, but there are laws in Prussia."

And he took legal proceedings, the result of which was that the king had to rebuild the mill, and to pay a good sum of money besides in compensation.

Although his Majesty was much chagrined at this end to the matter, he put the best face he could upon it, and turning to his courtiers he remarked:

"I am glad to see that there are just laws and upright judges in my kingdom."

A sequel to this incident occurred about forty years ago. A descendant of the miller of whom we have just been talking had come into possession of the mill.

After having struggled for several years against ever-increasing poverty, and being at length quite unable to keep on his business, he wrote to the King of Prussia, reminding him of the incident we have just related, and stating that, if his Majesty felt so disposed, he should be very thankful, in his present diffi-

culty, to sell the mill. The king wrote the following reply with his own hand:

"MY DEAR NEIGHBOR—I cannot allow you to sell the mill. It must always be in your possession as long as one member of your family exists, for it belongs to the history of Prussia. I regret, however, to hear you are in such straitened circumstances, and therefore send you herewith \$6,000, in the hope that it may be of some service in restoring your fortunes. Consider me always your affectionate neighbor.

FREDERICK WILLIAM."

THE VIOLET.

There is a fable of the garden of a king, in which the trees and flowers began all at once to sigh and lament together.

The oak was sad because it could have no flower. The rosebush was sad because it could have no fruit. The vine was sad because it must be trained against the wall, and so give no shade. "I am not of the least use in the world," said the oak. "I might as well die if I can have no fruit," said the rose. "What good can I do in the world?" said the vine.

Then the king saw a little violet which held up its contented fresh face the whole time, while all around were lamenting. And the king asked: "What makes you so fresh and happy when others sigh and are sorrowful?"—"I thought," said the violet, "that you had planted me here and thought, I will try to be the best little violet that I possibly can."

Dust remains dust, even if it flies to heaven.

A LIVING word is better than a thousand dead ones.

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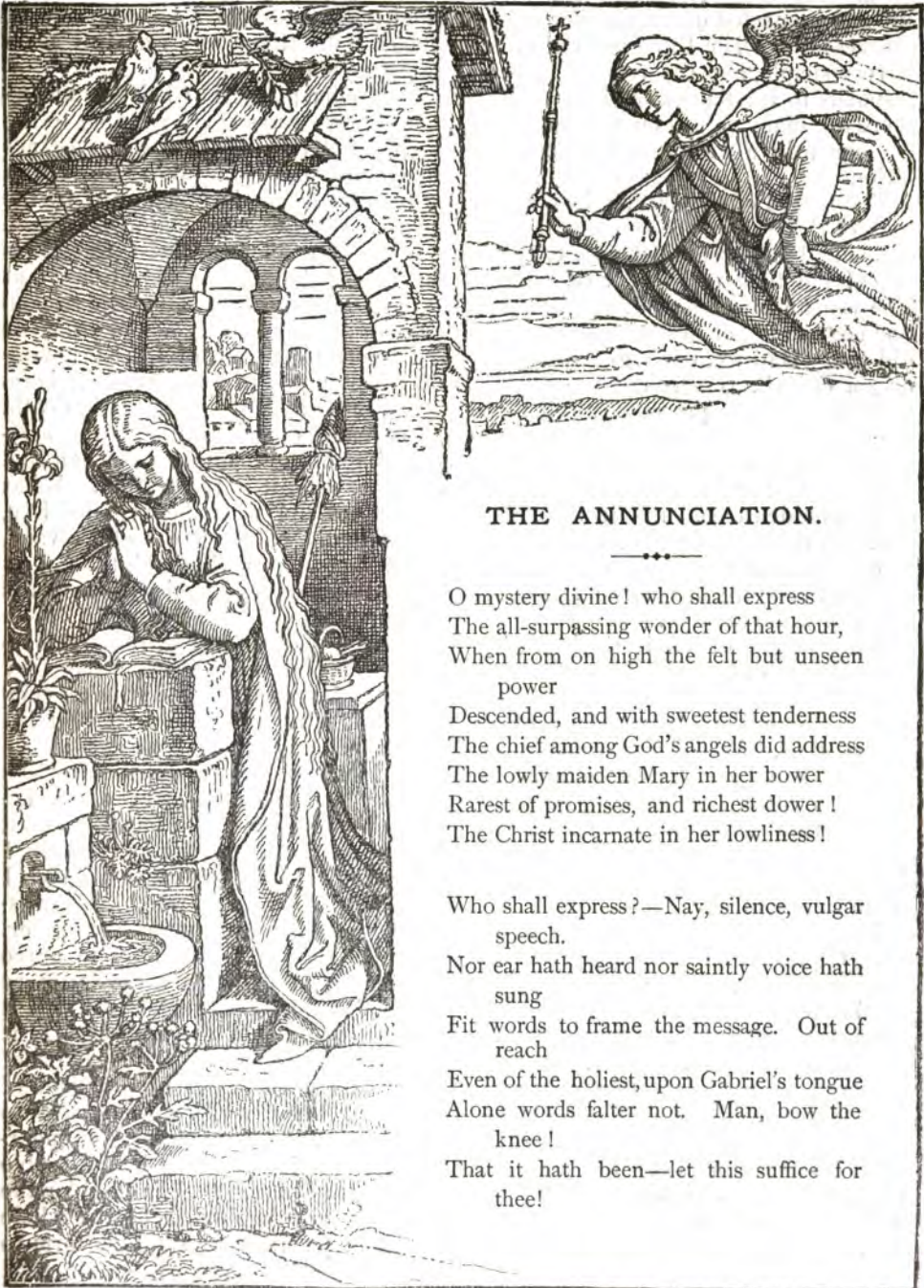
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THE ANNUNCIATION.

O mystery divine! who shall express
The all-surpassing wonder of that hour,
When from on high the felt but unseen
power

Descended, and with sweetest tenderness
The chief among God's angels did address
The lowly maiden Mary in her bower
Rarest of promises, and richest dower!
The Christ incarnate in her lowliness!

Who shall express?—Nay, silence, vulgar
speech.

Nor ear hath heard nor saintly voice hath
sung

Fit words to frame the message. Out of
reach

Even of the holiest, upon Gabriel's tongue
Alone words falter not. Man, bow the
knee!

That it hath been—let this suffice for
thee!

DEATH AND LIFE.

Sin and death, righteousness and life, are the two great contrasts of Scripture. By one man sin entered into the world, by another came righteousness. With sin was connected death, and with righteousness life. The Bible account of sin is very simple, and the redemption corresponds to it; though on both subjects there are many things unexplained, and consequently a wide field left for speculation.

The record of the first sin is, that Eve took of the fruit of the tree and did eat. Adam and Eve were in Paradise, free to eat of the fruit of every tree but one. The woman was tempted, and did eat. She gave unto her husband, and he also did eat. Had we tried to explain the origin of evil, this is not the solution which would have presented itself to our minds. Many have wondered that the misery of the world should have resulted from so small a matter as eating the fruit of a forbidden tree. But it was forbidden, and the act was one of disobedience. It was sin, and the results of sin, as set forth in Scripture, are more terrible than man can well conceive.

The strength of sin is the law. The disobedience of Eve was the violation of a divine command. Sin consists in whatsoever opposeth, or falleth short of the love of God. We set up a rule of righteousness, and by it try our actions; but there is a juster balance than ours, and by that rule all actions are tried. The great lesson of the apparent trivialness of Eve's transgression is the terrible evil of sin in any form.

Eve gave to her husband, and he did eat. On this it has often been remarked how sin spreads. It is never unfruitful, but branches forth in every direction. From the first man and woman it descended to all their posterity. How this happened is not definitely explained. Some understand that God held all mankind responsible for Adam's sin. What he did was imputed to his posterity. Another mode of viewing the subject is to think of sin having polluted the fountain; and then, by natural consequence,

the whole stream is polluted. The latter view obviates some objections that might be made to the justice of God. But, whatever be the explanation, the facts stand the same—that Adam sinned, and all men suffer if not *for*, certainly *from* transgression.

The redemption in Christ is understood in two ways corresponding to the two ways of viewing the effect of Adam's sin on his posterity. What we inherit by the first Adam is taken away by the second. What was imputed to us because of Adam is imputed to Christ, who takes our place. The same objections that were made against our being held responsible for Adam's transgressions are made against the doctrine of Christ having our sins imputed to Him. Some, therefore, prefer looking at Christ's death, not as an act of substitution, but as a purifying of the fountain of human life. In either case it is restoration. What the serpent did when he beguiled Eve, Christ undid on the cross of Calvary. So far we can go with certainty.

The following are the judicious words of an eminent writer and preacher lately deceased:—“Mere ‘theories of the Atonement,’ as they are called, have very little teaching in them, and still less comfort. Wise and good men have tried their minds upon them in all ages; they have done their best to explain Christ's sacrifice and the atonement which He worked out on the cross; but it does not seem to me that they have succeeded. I never yet read an explanation which I could fully understand, which fully satisfied my conscience or my reason either, or which seemed to me fully to agree with and explain all the texts of Scripture bearing on this great subject. But is it possible to explain the matter? Is it not too deep for mortal man? Is it not one of the deep things of God and of God alone, before which we must worship and believe? As for explaining or understanding it, must not that be impossible from its very nature? For consider the first root and beginning of the whole question; put it in the simplest form to



AS, IN ADAM ALL DIE,

SO IN CHRIST SHALL ALL BE MADE ALIVE'.

which all Christians agree:—The Father sent the Son to die for the world. Most true, but who can explain these words? We are stopped at the very first step by an abyss. Who can tell what is meant by the Father sending the Son? What is the relation, the connection between the Father and the Son? If we do

not know that, we can know nothing about the matter, about the very root and ground thereof. And we do know little or nothing. The Bible only gives us scattered hints here and there. It is one of the things of which we may say, with St. Paul, that we know in part and see through a glass darkly. How then dare we talk as if we knew all, as if we saw clearly? The Atonement is a blessed and awful mystery, hidden in God, ordained by and between God the Father and God the Son, and who can search out that? Who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been His counsellor? Did we sit by and were we taken into His counsel when He made the world? Not we. Neither were we when He redeemed the world. He did it; let that be enough for us. And He did it in love; let that be enough for us.'

'What,' says the same writer, 'is the breadth of Christ's cross? It is as broad as the whole world, for He died for the whole world, as it is written, "He is the propitiation not for our sins only, but for the sins of the whole world." And that is the breadth of Christ's cross. And what is the length of Christ's cross? The length thereof, says an old Father, signifies the time during which its virtue will last. How long, then, is the cross of Christ? Long enough to last through all time. As long as there is a sinner to be saved, as long as there is ignorance, sorrow, pain, death, or anything else which is contrary to God and hurtful to man in the universe of God, so long will Christ's cross last. And that is the length of the cross of Christ. And how high is Christ's cross? As high as the highest heaven, and the throne of God, and the bosom of the Father—that bosom out of which, too, can proceed all created things. Ay, as high as the highest heaven; for, if you will receive it, when Christ hung upon the cross, heaven came down on earth and earth ascended into heaven. Christ never showed forth His Father's glory so perfectly as when, hanging upon the cross, He cried in His death agony, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." These words showed the true height of the

cross, and caused John to know that his vision was true and no dream, when he saw afterward in the midst of the throne of God a Lamb as it had been slain. And that is the height of the cross of Christ. And how deep is the cross of Christ? This is a great mystery, and one which people in these days are afraid to look at, and darken it by their own will, because they will neither believe their Bibles nor the voice of their own hearts. But if the cross be as high as heaven, then it seems to me it must also be as deep as hell—deep enough to reach the deepest sinner, in the deepest pit to which he may fall. I believe that we shall find St. Paul's words true, when he says that Christ's love surpasses knowledge, and therefore that we shall find this also, that however high, it is higher still; however long, it is longer still; however deep, it is deeper still.'

'As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive.' For the renewal of man there was made a supernatural communication of the Divine nature—a new beginning in the chain of human progress. The human life of Christ took its appointed place in the course of historical events, yet it entered into history as a higher element. By His death He introduced life into the world, and this could only be done by Him who had life in Himself.

'In the cross,' says Thomas à Kempis, 'is found health; in the cross life; in the cross a protection from our enemies; in the cross an infusion of the sweets of heaven; in the cross strength of soul; in the cross the joy of the spirit; in the cross the germ of virtue; in the cross the perfection of holiness. There is no salvation of the soul, nor hope of eternal life, but in the cross. Go where thou wilt, search where thou wilt, and thou wilt not find a sublimer way above, or a securer way below, than that of the holy cross.'

(Day of Rest.)

LIFE is a book of which we have but one edition. Let each day's actions, as they add their pages to the indestructible volume, be such as we shall be willing to have an assembled world to read.

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CATHARINE VON BORA,

*The Wife of Martin Luther.**Translated from the German of Armin Stein, by M. Drisler.*

CHAPTER X.—DEFAMED AND YET HAPPY.

It was the season of the year when the evenings begin already to grow long and the dawn is slow in coming, when autumn says to summer: "Your time is over; make room for me."

In his room looking towards the ramparts sat Dr. Martin at a large table and wrote so that you could hear his pen scratching. The room was lighted by a hanging lamp, and a large glazed stove in which crackled a wood fire gave it a look of warmth and comfort, while a half-grown brown watch dog had stretched himself lazily before the fire. Opposite to the stove and not far from the book shelf, stood a valuable clock in a tall narrow case of polished cedar (a wedding present from the evangelical abbot Frederick of Nürnberg) which told off in a measured way the seconds as they passed.

Not far from the writer, clad in a plain black dress, and with her hair closely covered by a white cap, sat Catharine at her spinning wheel diligently busied with her work, yet not so much absorbed but that from time to time she raised her head and cast a loving look at her husband. There was deep silence in the room, broken only by the scratching of the pen, the whirring of the spinning wheel and the crackling of the fire.

Suddenly the spindle fell from Catharine's hand with a loud noise upon the stone floor, so that the Doctor, roused from his abstraction, started to his feet and looked around.

Catharine rose from her seat anxiously: "Do not be vexed with me, I will go away and leave you alone, lest I should disturb you again by my carelessness."

Luther made a gesture to stay her: "Not so, dear Catharine, stay with me rather. Have I not often told you that

your presence did not disturb, but rather refreshed and quickened me! Formerly, indeed, I thought that a man could work better and accomplish more if he had no wife to disturb him and no household cares to think of; now, I know the contrary. Just as a miller is never disturbed by the sound of the grinding of the mill, but, on the other hand, starts out of his sleep if it ceases, so it seems to me that my thoughts flow more freely and my pen moves faster when you are near, and the room is dreary when you are not by. Every day I thank God that he has given me so true and dear a wife. I must indeed expect that my enemies will say much evil of me and I shall be called a worse heretic on account of my marriage than when I attacked the pope's tiara and the monks' bellies, but I do not trouble myself about that, I rather rejoice at it. My marriage is the work of God, what wonder that the flesh stumbles at it? I might fear the anger of the world if my acts were not of God, but now let it rage against me, I will take heart and rejoice in it."

Catharine heard these words with deep delight:

"Dear Doctor, how happy you have made me! It has weighed upon me and driven sleep from my eyes many a night, to know of the slanders that were spoken, but it has caused me a tenfold greater sorrow to know that your enemies were increased through me. Now since I have heard you say that the world's calumny did but rejoice you, I am consoled. Ah," she continued, after a pause, "if our enemies had but eyes to see, they would cease to harass us and would rather envy us the home of happiness that has come to us through marriage."

Luther laid down his pen and drew his wife to him, "Yes, beloved, you say truly; marriage is like an altar from

which incense ascends perpetually; all sorrows are lighter, since each bears the other's burdens. I have a true and pious wife in whom my heart may safely trust, to whom I commit all my worldly goods, yea, life itself, and in possessing her I am a king. And, you, Catharine, have a pious husband who holds you more precious than the kingdom of France or the isle of Venice, so you are a queen."

Catharine crept closer to her husband and asked as she bent her blushing face over the table: "What are you writing?"

Luther took up a sheet of paper from the table and showed it to his wife:

See, these letters are blows aimed at a crowned head, that of Henry, King of England. Do not be afraid, Catharine, the robber hound, the hellish wolf, as he calls me, will soon silence him! I had almost forgotten what he wrote against me in the year 1521, and certainly silence would be the best answer to such unkingly attacks, but as he has lately undertaken to vituperate me on account of my marriage in a tone worthy of a street loafer, I will no longer refrain, but will speak out and silence him. Would you like to hear some part of what I have written?"

"As Catharine showed a desire to hear, he read to her the first two pages.

More than once Catharine interrupted him with an expression of satisfaction. "Ah, how gently you have written! This rejoices me, and I entreat you always in future thus to moderate your anger, since a man who is calm and self-controlled goes straighter to the point and wins the hearts of his adversaries better than one who storms and rages."

The Doctor took his wife's hand with a smile: "Thank you, dear, for the word. Although it is not specially a wife's calling to advise her husband in his duties, since her province is rather the kitchen and store room, yet it can in no way detract from a man's dignity to listen to his wife's counsel of gentleness and peace, when her own life is a bright example of them. I acknowledge to you that I am easily kindled to anger and have poured oil on the flames of strife when I should rather have sought to quench them by moderation and mild words. So

in this letter you shall be my censor, and I will thank God that he has given me a faithful Eckart to be by my side.*

At this moment voices were heard without, and directly the door opened and Dorothy, the servant, entered with a roll of paper in her hand: "A strange man gave me this, telling me to put it into the Doctor's own hands."

Luther opened the roll and found in it two letters from theologians at Leipsic, one in Latin addressed to him by Master Joachim van der Heyden, and one in German addressed to Catharine by Master John Hasenberg, surnamed Myricianus. "See, then," laughed Luther, "Mistress Catharine Luther has become a famous woman, and learned letters are addressed to her," and with mock solemnity he handed her the paper.

But his laughter soon died out when he began to read the letter addressed to him, and Catharine grew red and pale alternately as she became aware of the contents of that bearing her name. She could not finish it, for her heart fainted within her when she saw Martin Luther, the object of her almost adoring love, called a ruthless seducer and child of the devil, and herself advised to withdraw with all speed from his tainted presence and to return to the heavenly bridegroom from whom she had fled. She looked anxiously towards the Doctor whose brow darkened more and more as he perceived through what a flood of calumnies and reproaches he must wade. Suddenly, however, the cloud passed away, his face assumed its usual cheerfulness and at last he threw the letters on the table and laughed aloud, then turning to Catharine he asked: "What have they written to you, dear one? Oh, I see by your face they have served up to you the same tid-bit as to me. Go, then, take your pilgrim's staff that we may follow this advice and return at once to the bosom of the Church which alone can bless us."

Catharine looked up at the Doctor and smiled painfully:

* Catharine's softening influence on Luther was soon perceived, as Erasmus, at one time his friend and afterwards his bitterest enemy, remarks, "Luther begins to be milder and no longer rages with the pen."

"Oh, how can you make a jest of this? It hurts me sorely."

"Oh, no, dear Catharine," said Luther, soothing her, "I am glad and of good courage, for the more our enemies rage against us, the sweeter seems the lot that has fallen to me, and their malicious attacks can only help me to see more clearly the excellence of marriage."

At this moment Wolfgang, Luther's servant, entered: "Herr Doctor, the messenger who brought the packet is waiting without to know if you will give him anything?"

Luther put his hand at once in his pocket and finding no money there went to a cupboard in the wall and took out two gulden: "Truly, the man who brought me such joy and pleasure must have a reward. Call him in!"

As the messenger entered, Luther clapped him on the back: "Good friend, go in peace and tell those who sent you what joy your two letters brought us. But you, the bearer of such happiness must have your reward; take these two gulden with the blessing of Dr. Martin and his wife Catharine."

The man stood perplexed, not knowing if this was jest or earnest, and hesitated to take the proffered gift; but Luther pressed the money upon him and wished him a safe journey. Then, turning to Catharine, who still stood a prey to contending emotions, he drew her to his heart: "See, dearest Catharine, the world and the devil are raging against you to make you leave Dr. Martin. But the more they seek to tear you away the closer I will hold you, for here is the place where you belong."

Softly weeping, Catharine lay on her husband's breast, but her tears were no longer tears of sorrow.

CHAPTER XI. — THE FAITHFUL ECKART.

"How Hans lingers? He can't have repented surely?"

"Not he, Eberhard, he was the most indignant at the heretic's last piece of knavery. — Landlord, fill up my mug!"

"Mine too!" cried a third voice.

As the landlord brought what had been called for, a fiery young nobleman enter-

ed and was greeted with acclamation by the three speakers.

This scene took place in an ale house near Wurzen called the Blue Pike. A fire of pine wood dimly lighted the low dark room and threw flickering shadows upon the faces of the guests. The room was as untidy as the landlord himself, whose waistcoat was stiff with dirt and whose face seemed little acquainted with soap and water. Probably he had seldom before entertained such guests who seemed ill at ease in this den and were evidently forcing themselves to drink.

They were four young noblemen from the neighborhood, Hans von Soldau, Eberhard von Kriebitsch, Wolf von Steinbach, Joachim von Spergau, who had arranged a secret meeting at the Blue Pike.

"It is well that you are here, Hans," cried they to the new-comer as some one made a sign to the landlord to leave the room.

"Do not be angry, friends, that I come late," croaked Hans von Soldau in his hoarse voice as soon as he had taken his seat. "I wished to learn more exactly if the rumor that had reached me were true, that fortune was about to favor our undertaking and that a suitable opportunity for our revenge on the monster would soon present itself."

"What is that?" cried the three others.

Hans von Soldau raised his hand warningly:

"Hush, and listen to me. I went to my confessor and made my confession that I might proceed with more joy and courage and the holy father gave me his blessing and promised me a rich reward in heaven. Yet he cautioned me against open violence which might kindle a new flame worse than the scarcely repressed peasants' war: the deed must be secretly done, that no one may know where the heretic has gone."

The speaker rose and continued in a louder tone: "Friends! Brothers! We are all in the same situation and must hold together. Each one of us has lost a part of his inheritance through the unwelcome return of a sister. Was it to this end that we compelled our parents to send our sisters to a convent, that a

worthless monk might open the gates for them to return home? Woe to you, Luther! You succeeded at Nimptschen — woe to you that you stretched out your rescuing hand to Freiberg."

In bitter anger Wolfgang von Steinbach brought his closed fist down upon the table and growled: "I am 10,000 gulden poorer — Luther, you shall pay for this!"

"What do I care for money!" cried Eberhard von Kriebitsch with a venomous glance, "I could do without the trash, but to have the dragon, my step-sister, with whom I never could agree, again in the house, is gall and wormwood to me."

"Silence for a while," said Joachim von Spergau, "let us learn from Hans what is the opportunity which good luck has put in our way."

Hans von Soldau stroked his bushy red beard and began:

"Spalatinus, the Elector's court chaplain and secretary, is to be married on the 19th of November and has invited Luther to his wedding. By chance I met the messenger who was carrying Luther's acceptance to Altenburg. Now, my friends, does not everything happen rightly for us? Ha, Luther, your last meat will soon be eaten!"

So deep a silence followed these hoarse ly spoken words that Hans looked wonderingly at his comrades and asked haughtily: "What! faint hearts, does your courage fail you? Well, I can do the deed alone, I have no need of you."

Joachim von Spergau, the most collected of the four, answered in a tone of some feeling: "Do not revile us, Hans! It is not cowardice if one pauses before such a bloody piece of business as this."

"What do you mean, Joachim?" rejoined Hans somewhat more mildly. "The deed can be done without blood, and my father confessor knows a place where the heretic can remain dead to the world, without being put to death. Should it be absolutely necessary to shed his blood, say at once whether you will be a helper or not. Now is the time. If you are afraid, then go; I alone will have the glory of ridding the world of a pest, but

if you have no fear, then raise three fingers and take the oath."

It cost the others a struggle to bind themselves by an oath to a possible deed of murder, for this had at first been far from their thoughts, but the scorn which gleamed from the eyes of Hans drove them to a hasty resolution and they took the oath.

After the young man had more fully explained his plans, they paid their reckoning, and mounting their horses, separated, each taking a different route.

"Why do you look so sad, dear Catharine?" asked Luther of his wife. "Are you in pain or are you trying to conceal some sorrow from me?"

Catharine sighed deeply as she answered: "My heart is heavy, and I know not why. Often a presentiment comes over me for which I can give no reason, and which I cannot put into words, but it is there, and will not be driven away."

"What, then, do you forbode?" asked Luther laughing.

"It seems as if some great misfortune were hanging over us."

Luther raised his finger warningly: "Ah, little visionary, you are seeing ghosts where none should be. Do you not know that such a vision is of no avail, since it not only tortures our own hearts, but grieves the Lord? When God's angel watches over us, we should fear no spirits. It is not hard to discover the reason of your uneasiness; it is nothing but fear and anxiety because the fugitive nuns from the convent at Freiberg have taken refuge in our house and sit at our table. You will not be vexed at this; you will not grudge the poor fugitives shelter till their relatives' anger has subsided?"

"Do not wrong me so, Doctor," entreated Catharine. "I have welcomed the poor maidens with all my heart, more gladly than I did those five monks from Thuringia to whom you gave food, drink and clothing, and who were so ungrateful, stealing out of our house like thieves. No, Doctor, our three runaways from Freiberg are very dear to me, and I will cheerfully divide what I have with them — besides, yesterday fresh supplies of

grain, malt and wood came from the Elector. Yet my anxiety may well be caused by the presence of the three nuns, especially as one of them, the Duchess Ursula von Münsterberg, is the niece of Duke George, your bitterest enemy, and may well bring danger to us."

"Calm yourself, dear Catharine," said Luther in a soothing manner, "and trust in God. This is a pious service, which we render to the fugitives, and God will not let us suffer for it. Should we, however, suffer through this act, remember that it is written: 'Blessed are ye, when men revile you and persecute you for my name's sake.'"

Catharine was silent, but her heart was heavy. She reproached herself and strove to banish gloomy thoughts; but, in spite of all, her heart was heavy.

The next morning, when family prayers and breakfast were over, and the servants and guests had left the room, Catharine came and stood before her husband, looking very earnest. "Dear Doctor, now I know the reason of my anxiety; God has showed it to me in a dream to-night. Do you believe in dreams?"

Luther answered: "Scripture teaches us that God makes use of dreams to manifest His thoughts to men and to show them what is about to happen, whether for instruction, or as warning. What did your dream show you?"

"Nothing good," returned Catharine, "but something that fills me with fear. I saw you in an open wagon, going to the wedding of your friend Spalatinus. On the way, four armed men rushed from behind a hedge, fell upon the wagon, dragged you from it, and struck at your head with their swords so that blood flowed from it, while Ursula von Münsterberg, the escaped nun, stood by and tore her hair. I awoke at this, and rejoiced to find it but a dream. When I slept again, the same dream came a second time and showed me the same sight. Then I knew that the dream was no delusion, but a revelation sent by God in order that you should not go. Dear Doctor, I entreat you, I implore you, for Christ's sake, remain this once at home,

for if you go, anxiety for you will surely kill me."

She hung so urgently upon her husband's arm and looked at him so pleadingly with eyes swimming in tears, that her distress moved him deeply and although at first he had been somewhat vexed at the visionary, his mind soon changed, and looking tenderly at the faithful wife, he answered gently:

"I am sorry for Spalatinus, who, I know, will miss me on his festival day; but it would grieve me more to know that you, dear wife, were suffering anxiety at home while I was enjoying myself at Altenburg. I will not go and will send word at once to Spalatinus not to expect me."

"Catharine's eyes followed him gratefully as he went to his study, and wrote to his friend:

"My Spalatinus! I would willingly be present at your wedding and rejoice with those that rejoice, but a reason has arisen to prevent me, namely the tears of my Catharine, who is persuaded that you desire nothing less than my danger; nevertheless her foreboding soul, twice warned by a dream, predicts peril of life and limb for me, as if murderers were lying in wait for me. This seems not altogether unlikely, since it has come to my ears that the release of the three nuns from the convent of Freiberg excited great anger among Duke George's nobles. I know well that I am in the hand of the Almighty and not a hair of my head can fall without His will; yet I have compassion on my poor Catharine, who would almost die with anxiety during my absence. Do not, then, be offended if I am not present at your wedding feast. God grant you his richest blessing on that day.

From Wittenberg, the day after the feast of S. Martin, Nov. 11, 1525.

MARTIN LUTHER."

The messenger who took the letter to Altenburg received a gulden more than his fee from Catharine, who put besides a flask of Franconian wine into his wallet. When she had seen him leave the court she drew a long breath, and a

long upward look told the deep thankfulness to God.

Scarcely two weeks later Luther received a letter from his friend Spalatinus which ran thus :

"Dear friend and brother Martin! Although at first I grieved to miss you on the joyful day when your presence would have made me glad, yet now I rejoice at your absence, since in this I recognize the hand of God, who interposed to save you from great danger. It has become known that four young men were lying in wait to seize upon you because you released their sisters from the convent, thereby diminishing the inheritance of the brothers who are obliged to maintain these fugitives and portion them. One of them, in especial, Hans von Soldau, is a lawless character from whom anything evil might be expected. Therefore, my friend, thank your Catharine, who, under God, has been to you a faithful Eckart. The grace of God be with you. SPALATINUS."

Deeply moved, Luther laid the letter on the table and sought Catharine in the kitchen, where he knew her moving about. He drew her to him, kissed her on both cheeks and softly whispered : "My faithful Eckart!"

CHAPTER XII. — A NEW LIFE.

"See, Wolfgang, how beautifully the young plants are on!" said Luther one bright afternoon in June, 1526, to his servant, the lame Wolfgang Sieberger, who just then came limping into the garden.

"These are the radishes and turnips from my friend Lange at Erfurt, and there are the cucumbers and melons which the Nürnberger Wenzel Link sent me. I take great pleasure too in the roses from Altenburg; the buds are just ready to burst forth and already one can see the color of their clothing. How pleased Mistress Catharine will be when I bring her the first one.—But how have you soiled your waistcoat, Wolfgang? Have you been helping the maid servant in the stable again? Have a care of your honor and reputation, learned Herr Famulus!

Wolfgang brushed the straw from his

clothing with his hand and replied in an important tone:

"If I had not helped the maid we would have been the poorer by a sucking pig, for one of the seven born last Monday wandered away from the stable into the muck where it was nearly smothered."

Luther laughed aloud: "Ah, how Dr. Martin and his wife have become peasants and Herr Wolfgang Sieberger a farm laborer. I never dreamed of such honor and dignity. Formerly when returning from the pulpit or lecture room, I entered the court and it was as quiet as a church; but now on all sides there is a squeaking and a grunting, a cackling, a hissing and a bleating that quite startles me, and I think what would the old pious abbots and monks say in their graves if they knew such worldly unrestrained clamor prevailed in the holy rooms. By the way, I must go into the garden and smell the lovely flowers where the bees hum around me and more than once some angry little fellow has made me feel his sting. How the quiet convent teems with life! Wherever I go, I stumble upon a maidservant and find almost too many domestics. One thing only is wanting — that I should buy a horse of some Jew, put on a smock frock and follow the plow."

Wolfgang listened, laughing and shaking his head as he answered: "Worthy Herr Doctor, you laugh at the farm creatures about your house, yet you should show respect to the one who brought them all into such a thriving condition, for without them you would be badly off."

"What do you mean, Wolf?" asked Luther attentive.

"What I mean, is easily told," returned Wolfgang limping nearer, "and I can prove it with figures. How much was the yearly income which the gracious Elector granted you since your marriage? 200 gulden. How much did you spend during the past year. Nearly 500, including the three goblets which were pledged for 50 gulden."

"Wolfgang!" interrupted Luther, "what an astonishing reckoning!"

"It is right to a cent," continued the servant, "since I kept account according to your directions. And if you re-

member how many strangers sat at your table in the course of the year, how many students you entertained daily, how many poor wayfarers, fugitive monks, nuns and other guests are fed by you each day, not to speak of the presents which your lavish generosity is ever giving as well to strangers as to your own poor relations on the occasion of a marriage or a baptism when your hand is ever open — if you think of all these and more besides, you will easily see that 200 gulden can scarcely last four months. Your purse is always open and your hand is always in it; indeed you would be now a beggar and in a debtor's prison if Mistress Luther had not managed the house so well and husbanded her resources so carefully, that what is needful is always forthcoming. Therefore I look with great respect to Mistress Luther, who is gentle and kind and yet has a keen and provident spirit and so much strength that, although a great deal rests upon her shoulders, she is never weary but always cheerful, and does all things with so skillful a hand that it is a pleasure to see her. Yet there would be no need of all this live stock if the Herr Doctor would take fees for his lectures, as the other professors do, instead of delivering them gratis and seeking reward only from God. The Herr Doctor might be still richer if he would take what the publishers offer him for his books, and especially for his translation of the Bible. He would now be a Croesus and free from all care about daily bread."

Luther made a gesture of displeasure and raised his eye-brows so that his eyes were still larger and almost threatening: "Still the same old tune, Wolfgang; it wearies me? Have I not repeatedly told you that I will not serve God for hire? I will not give my enemies occasion to say before the world that I preached the Gospel for money and sold the Word of God to make myself rich and to be able to spend my days in pleasure. Freely ye have received, freely give, saith the Lord. The man who died for me toiled hard; therefore I too will labor without earthly reward."

Wolfgang, who was on very familiar terms with the Doctor, ventured here to

interrupt him: "Well, well, Doctor, that is good enough to listen to, but if you desire nothing for yourself and despise earthly things, are you not bound to care for your family, and to lay up some provision for their future?"

"That I will not do," returned Luther, decidedly, "otherwise they would cease to put their trust in God and their own hands, and would learn to set their hearts upon money and to depend upon it."

Wolfgang turned away and went slowly back to the court, shaking his head and talking to himself as his custom was: "A wonderful man, indeed! How lofty his thoughts are, and how petty and miserable we seem beside him! Never before have I seen such a man! He will beg and plead for others, so that it would move a stone to hear him, and yet he asks nothing for himself, however great his need, so that he will always remain on the "Poor List", as he himself said lately. How many have obtained what they desired from the Elector through his intercession, while he not only refrains from asking anything for himself, but restrains those who would represent to the Elector that Luther is in want. It is useless for any one to come to him with a present; he takes nothing, except from his most intimate friends after long entreaty, or, if he accepts any thing, he divides it among the poor, or with his friends, as he did the 200 gulden sent him lately by the Elector as a mark of favor, and the other 100 which Dr. Bugenhagen received from some unknown friend for him. It grieves me when I think of the fine rose sent to him lately from the Elector's forest, which ought to have lasted us three or four days, but the Doctor must needs call his friends together to partake with him, or the dainty would have no taste. I regret, too, heartily, the beautiful drinking vessels of glass and tin, a wedding present from our gracious master, in which Mistress Catharine took especial pleasure, and in which she used every day to bring from the cellar of the town hall the wine presented by the city counselor. Now this treasure must go to Pastor Agricola at Eisleben, because at his last visit he admired it greatly. I re-

member how the Doctor whispered to his guest: 'I will send it to you before it gets another master, for my Catharine is very desirous of keeping it for herself, merely to look at.' I was secretly glad that when the Doctor wished to send the vessel by a messenger to Pastor Agricola on his birthday, he could not find it, because Mistress Catharine had hidden it away. That will not help her, however, since the Doctor wrote to Eisleben that, to his sorrow, he could not keep his word immediately, but as soon as his wife should be confined he would send the vessel. What a wonderful man the Doctor is, and how little he can be judged by the same standard as other mortals. Truly, God's wisdom is seen in that, such a wife was given to him, with such domestic virtues, economy, exactness, industry, caution and experience, which enable her to keep house on a little, nay, to make a little go a great way. The Doctor is fortunate in obtaining a wife unlike himself, so all is harmonious."

During this soliloquy, Wolfgang had reached the stable, where the turning lathe stood, at which the Doctor was accustomed to work when wearied with mental labor. At this moment he heard steps behind him, and turning, saw Luther coming to the stable: "Let us turn a little while, Wolf," said Luther, "and make a trial of the new tools, which my friend Link sent me yesterday from Nürnberg. My chest is so oppressed that I can hardly draw my breath."

Wolfgang brought out the tools and the two men began to work as soon as they had taken off their coats.

They had not worked long, when a maid servant rushed in with a red face and tear stained eyes: "Herr Doctor!" she panted forth, "Herr Doctor!"

Luther looked up from his work: "What is it, Dorothea?" then a quick presentiment brought a flush of trembling joy to his cheek.

The maid could only speak by signs, but Luther understood this dumb speech, and without stopping to put on his coat, hastened across the court, and in a few moments stood beside the bed of his faithful wife, who had presented him the most precious gift a wife can bestow

upon her husband. There, upon the bed, staring at its father, with large wide open eyes, lay a beautiful boy. An hour previously, Catharine had been walking in the garden, feeling as well as usual, and now, with little suffering, and in so short a time, that she scarcely realized it, God had given her her first son.

Full of a father's joy, Luther took the dear pledge of love in his arms, caressed it, looked into its eyes and caressed it again.

"Heavenly Father," he murmured in deep, heart-felt tones, "how has poor Brother Martin merited such a blessing? Thy pure, undeserved mercy has bowed me to the very ground, so that I fain would weep. Beloved child, how welcome you are to me. See, my whole heart goes out to him who, as yet, has done nothing to win my love. I can now well understand how God's love goes out to us poor creatures without waiting till we love him and turn to him. God cannot wait for that, he must come to seek us. Little one, I will name you John, so that as often as I call you, I may think of the grace which God has this day showed us, and for your grandfather's sake also you shall bear this name. Already I see him opening his eyes, heavy with age, at the news of your birth, and can hear his withered lips praising God for it."

Then turning to his wife, he went on: "Dear Catharine, how rich you have made me and how you have won from me even deeper, warmer love. Gladly would I die for you, if need were. — But now I must hasten to bring the pastor and witnesses to help make a Christian of this little heathen."

He put on his cloak and cap, and set out to carry the good news from house to house, telling it also to those whom he met, and receiving their congratulations. An hour later, at four o'clock in the afternoon, there were assembled around the child already prettily dressed, the sponsors, Cranach, Bugenhagen and Jonas and the officiating minister Deacon George Röer, as the custom of the time required that the child should be baptized immediately after its birth.

The arrival of this infant brought new life into Luther's house. There is a bond

of union in the word "child," it unites more closely still those whom love has already joined together at the altar. In the child each parent sees the other's likeness; it belongs to both, they have a common right in it and its presence warns them that they are indissolubly united.

Dearly as Luther had previously loved his Catharine, he cherished her now more tenderly than ever, and Catharine, who soon perceived his increased love, would often take the child upon her lap and whisper to it:

"Sweetest treasure, you know nothing, can do nothing, yet your mother owes you much for the blessing you have brought her."

Soon there came to be rivalry between Catharine and an aunt to whom Luther gave a home when she quitted her convent. Each woman wanted the care of the child; Catharine because she was the mother and had borne the pains of childbirth for him, Aunt Lena because she longed to do something to show her gratitude to those who cared for her old age.

But any one who saw Dr. Martin in the nursery playing with his little John might well ask: "Can this be the man whose word moves the world, whose name is on every tongue, who is called the hero of Worms, the prophet of the most High God? Is this the man before whom princes and kings bow down, whom the pope and all his bishops fear more than the Turk? How the great man can be little with the little ones? How he talks baby talk to the child and is indeed

a master of it! He not only knows Hebrew, Greek and Latin, but he can talk with the birds and has children's speech at his tongue's end so that it is a pleasure to listen to him. It is a wonder too how the man on whom devolves a greater work than on king or pope, can find time to play with his little son and watch his daily growth so that his letters to his friends always have something to tell of little John, how his teeth are coming through, and how he already begins to creep around the room and babble and

scold with pretty gestures of anger. There are learned men, nine out of ten at least, who sit in the study buried in their books, and these books are their children to whom their whole strength, their whole time, their whole heart belongs. They do not care that a wife sits up stairs with living children, it is too trifling for them to take the little ones and to descend from the height of their intellectual life to the A B C of human development; no, they have no time for that or, if constrained by neces-

sity to make the attempt, they are as awkward as a goat would be playing the flute, so that the wife who has vexed herself because her husband was continually abstracted, says after he is gone, "He may stay over his books, I can manage better alone."

Martin Luther was a learned man to whom many another one must yield, but he was more than this, had a many-sided mind, he was a genius, great in all things, even in this that he could be little with



the little ones. Little John must have been a winning child, for every one loved him, and often pretty toys and dainties were sent to him, nor could his father ever return home from a journey without bringing some present to his beloved child.

A letter has been preserved which Luther wrote from the fortress of Coburg in the year 1520 to his four year old son. This is a beautiful specimen of the great man's readiness in adapting his language to children and will be a fitting close to our twelfth chapter.

"Grace and peace in Christ my beloved son. I see gladly that you study well and pray diligently. Continue to do this, my child, and when I return I will bring you a beautiful gift. I know a lovely pleasure garden in which are many children who wear golden coats and pick up under the trees beautiful apples, pears, cherries and plums. They dance and sing merrily, and have beautiful little ponies with golden bits and silver saddles. I asked the man to whom the garden belongs what children these were? He said, they are pious children who love to pray and study." Then I said, "Dear sir, I too have a son whose name is little Hans Luther; might he not come into this garden too and eat these beautiful apples and pears, ride these pretty ponies and play with these children?"

"Truly," answered the man, "if he is pious and loves to pray and study, he shall come into the garden with Lippus and Jost, Melancthon's and Jonas' children and when they all come, they shall have fifes and drums, lutes and all kinds of stringed instruments and they shall dance and shoot bows and arrows," and he showed me there a beautiful meadow in the garden prepared for dancing in which hung golden fifes and drums and lutes and silver bows and arrows. But it was very early and the children had not yet breakfasted so that I could not wait to see them dancing, but said to the man: "Ah, dear sir, I will go quickly and write to my dear little son Hans that he must be good and love to pray and study so that he may come into this garden, but he has an aunt Lena whom he must bring with him." Then the man

said it should be so and I must go write this all to you. Therefore, dear child, study and pray with faith, and tell Lippus and Jost to do so too, and you shall all come into the garden. The good God keep you. Greet Aunt Lena and give her a kiss from me.

Your loving father,
MARTIN LUTHER.

Thus wrote the man who, at the fortress of Coburg, was strengthening his friends with counsel and prayer at the very time that he was engaged in defending the Evangelical faith before the Emperor at the Imperial Diet of Augsburg and laboring to obtain for the Reformation the right of existence.

It is not a belief in immortality that will deliver a man from the woes of humanity, but faith in the God of life, the father of lights, the God of all consolation and comfort. Believing in him, a man can leave his friends, and their and his own immortality, with everything else, even his and their love and protection, with utter confidence in his hands. Until we have this life in us, we shall never be at peace. The living God dwelling in the heart he has made, and glorifying it by inmost speech with himself,—that is life, assurance, and safety. Nothing else is or can be such.
—MacDonald.

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IN THE WOOD.

I went one evening into a wood, and sat down to rest and watch the sunset between the branches of some large trees, which made a frame of leaves to the glorious picture. Heaven seemed opened as I gazed through the rifts and torn edges of clouds, crimson and golden, and all the tender hues of pink and purple which are seen in such a sky, and lie like celestial islands on a sea of light.

As I sat I observed an aged man seated on a felled tree at some distance, but he appeared not to heed the beauty of the scene as he sat, with his head resting on his hand, gazing abstractedly on the ground. Presently, to my surprise, two figures came noiselessly through a path in the brushwood and passed me without word or sound. One was a woman, young and very fair, clad in a white robe which she held loosely in her hand. Her face, which was very lovely, was half turned from me, and I noticed that there was a rainbow upon her brow, and that in her bosom she wore a nosegay of snowdrops. By her side, and holding her other hand, a child ran softly. He carried a branch of palm, and sunlight—not that of the dying day, but a tender, morning light—seemed to follow his steps and illumine both as they gradually disappeared from view.

I gazed after them, unable to comprehend who two such pilgrims could be, and at last bethought me of the silent old man, who still sat on the tree trunk not far from me.

‘Who are those travellers who have just passed?’ I asked.

He looked surprised, and then said simply, ‘Why, Death, of course, and a child.’

I started, and almost thought he must be crazed; but before I had time to repeat my question in another form, a strange procession emerged from the darkness, which had settled over the wood where the trees stood thick and close.

Two young men carried a bier slowly past. One was clad in white and the other in black. They had pale, earnest faces, and on the brow of each glittered

a star. The bier was draped with white and covered with amarynth, and I saw on it the form of a youth, not dead, but smiling in a sleep. One of the two who bore the bier carried a harp, the other a crown. Over the harp hung a wreath of withered flowers, and so they disappeared, and I thought I heard them singing far away.

‘Who are these?’ I asked again in surprise.

‘Death,’ repeated the old man, in the same tone as before. ‘Death and a youth; did you not see? If you wait long enough you will see plenty of such sights, all different.’

Then he pulled my sleeve and pointed towards the other side, and there I saw a figure, whether man or angel I could hardly say, leading a young maiden, who looked upwards with a face of celestial beauty. She carried a sheaf of pure white lilies, and before her and her guide flew a dove.

My eyes became suddenly clouded with tears as I looked, and I could ask no explanation. As I turned away, intending to return home and ponder on what I had seen, I was stopped by two figures who came slowly along, through the wood, in a prayerful silence.

One was an old man, wrapped in a mantle, with his hands clasped over a sheathed sword. The other was a young man, with a snake coiled round his wrist, and a sand-glass, almost empty, in his hand. He scattered poppies as he walked.

‘Did you see that?’ said the old man by my side, with sudden eagerness, as they disappeared. ‘He is almost home. That was Death again.’

I sat down, and begged him to explain the strange sights which I had witnessed.

‘The first which you saw,’ said he, ‘was a child going to heaven. The gates are open, you see, up there; but we cannot see much. That figure with the child was Death. The rainbow is the tears shed on earth for the child. The children’s Death always wears a rainbow; they are so much wept over by mothers.’

'And the next?' I asked.

'Ah, that was a youth. Death and Life were carrying him to the gate. The young only lose life mortal when it is swallowed up of the immortal.'

'Which was Life?'

'The one who carried the harp hung with flowers. I do not need to tell you that the next was a young maiden called to Paradise. The dove imaged her peace, and the lilies her purity.'

'And the last,' I said, for I had begun to comprehend what I saw, 'was Age going home to rest?'

'Yes,' said the old man, 'his sword is sheathed, and the glass almost run out. The figure who went with each was their Death.'

'Has every one a Death?' I asked. 'Is there not but one, who calls for each when his time comes?'

'Heaven has only one road,' said the

old man, solemnly; 'but Death has many arrows, and many messengers.'

'I wonder what my Death will be like?' said I.

'You will never know. You will be seeing Christ and nothing else; not even the road. But I shall see you go, and I shall know that you will soon be at rest. I shall rest some day too, Death and I; we shall both rest'—and he looked wearily at a scythe which lay on the grass.

I bade him good-night, and went home; and as I went, these words rang in my ears:

'Thou goest thine, and I go mine,
Many ways we wend;
Many days and many ways,
Ending in one end.

* * *

Room to roam, but only one home
For all the world to win.'

(Day of Rest.)



Bugenhagen was startled and asked more particularly about his friend's condition.

"Alas," returned Mistress Catharine, panting with the haste she made—for the sick man was Martin Luther,— "his head reels, and he sees frightful visions. I believe that the devil is let loose upon him and will bring him to shame and destroy his whole work. When I speak loving and gentle words to him, he sits quite still and stares fixedly, with glassy eyes, at one corner, will neither eat nor drink, and refuses to move from the dull room, even to go into the garden. Once before, in January, he had such an attack, but then a drink of thistle tea quickly restored him. Now, however, such natural means avail nothing."

Bugenhagen had listened with painful interest, and now laid a hand soothingly on Catharine's arm: "Do not fear, dear Mistress Luther, it is not the devil that causes this disturbance, but the sluggish blood, which goes to the brain and causes those visions. I can easily explain this uneasiness, which he now suffers in consequence of the errors which he committed in the convent through ignorance, and at the bidding of a false religion in fasting and scourging, in cold and watching. Besides, the overworked man sits and bends over his books, deprives himself of fresh air, tortures his brain with constant thinking and searching, and more than all this, his spirit is deeply wounded by the enmity, with which the whole world regards his work, by the unhappy peasants' war, which grieved him sorely, and by the dispute with the Swiss about the sacraments. These things all combine to cause him hours of bitter anguish, yet by God's help they will pass, and I will come with you, to do what I can towards his restoration."

Both now went towards the Augustinian convent and reached the court, in which were gathered the servants, who stood aside with looks of anxiety when they saw the pastor, Luther's father confessed, coming with Mistress Luther.

Bugenhagen found the sick man sitting in his chair with bowed head and drooping arms. His cheerful greeting obtained

only a sad smile and these words in reply: "You are welcome, dear Bugenhagen, I was longing to confess to you and obtain absolution. Every sin that I ever committed of thought, word or deed weighs upon me now, and I implore my God to have mercy upon the poor sinner for Christ's sake. You, dear Bugenhagen, bring me hope from God, that I may find grace before the All-Merciful."

Deeply moved, Bugenhagen pronounced over him the absolution, and then spoke further of the nature of his sickness.

"Ah, dear Doctor," returned Luther, "such hours as I must pass through, may well call to mind St. Paul and his sore strait, when he was buffeted of Satan; for such evils cannot arise from natural causes. Because I am often outwardly cheerful, many think my path is one of roses, but God knows how far otherwise it is with me."

Bugenhagen strove to console him, as he had already consoled Mistress Catharine; but he could not perceive that he made much impression upon Luther.

As it was now breakfast time, Bugenhagen reminded the Doctor of the invitation which both had received from the Saxon marshal, Hans von Loser, to breakfast with him. "The fresh air and pleasant company will do you good, Martin. Come, command yourself and go."

Catharine who, meantime, had come in, seconded these entreaties to which Luther finally yielded and went.

In the inn where the meal was prepared they found a chosen company and a dainty feast; but Luther ate little, although he forced himself to enter with cheerfulness into the conversation going on around him.

Towards noon he quietly slipped away and went to the house of his friend Justus Jonas, the provost of the collegiate church of All Saints. Luther sat down in an arbor in the garden and opened his heart to his friend, knowing him to be a man of sound judgment and warmly attached to himself.

Two hours later he paused and invited Jonas to supper at four o'clock. When the latter arrived at the appointed hour, he found the Doctor stretched upon his

bed, very weak and complaining of a ringing in his ears. Suddenly he became very faint and called for water which Jonas brought and threw over him.

This seemed to revive the sufferer, for he lay quietly with his eyes wide open. A little later a change passed over his face and he had a heavy chill. Wearily, he folded his hands and strove to articulate this prayer: "My God, if the hour that Thou hast appointed me is come, Thy will be done. Oh Lord, rebuke me not in Thine indignation, neither chasten me in Thy displeasure. Have mercy upon me, O! Lord, for I am weak; O! Lord, heal me, for my bones are vexed. My soul also is sorely troubled but Lord, how long wilt Thou punish me? Turn Thee, O! Lord, and deliver my soul; O! save me, for Thy mercy's sake. For in death no man remembereth Thee; and who will give Thee thanks in the pit? I am weary of my groaning; every night wash I my bed and water my couch with my tears. My beauty is gone for very trouble and worn away because of all mine enemies. Away from me, all ye that work vanity: for the Lord hath heard the voice of my weeping, the Lord hath heard my weeping, the Lord hath heard my petition, the Lord will receive my prayer. All mine enemies shall be confounded and sore vexed, they shall be turned back and put to shame suddenly. Thou, Lord, art my helper, my refuge for ever and ever. Amen."

During this prayer Catharine had entered with the physician Augustine who immediately ordered the cold body to be covered with warm clothes, while Bugenhagen, who had come also, took his stand at the foot of the bed."

Luther seemed not to know those present; his heart and thoughts were with God, and his looks steadily directed upwards. He began again to pray, this time not in the words of the Psalms, but out of the fulness of his heart. All folded their hands in tearful devotion when these words came from the sick man, "Death, where is thy sting? Hell, where is thy victory? Praise be to God who giveth us the victory through Jesus Christ our Lord. Behold, I rest in peace; for thy mercy is my shield and defence. Lord Jesus, re-

ceive my spirit! By thy wounds I am saved, on thy righteousness I lean; thou art the only Saviour and High Priest who bears all our sins." Turning suddenly to those standing by, he went on, "Dear, faithful friends, lest after my death the world should say that I retracted my teaching, I call you to witness my confession:

"In all good conscience I declare that I have taught faith, love, the crucifixion, the sacrament and other articles of the faith according to God's Word and by His command which constrained me in this matter. And since some have reproached me with having written too sharply and bitterly against the papists and the faction spirits, I declare that I do not repent it; for I desired no one's harm, but the happiness even of my enemies. I would willingly remain a little longer, for I have still much to say against the Zwinglians; but God's will be done. — Christ is stronger than Belial and can command that every stone become a man to fight for His name!"

His eyes fell upon his wife who stood apart, sobbing. He beckoned her to him, took her hand and said: "Dearest Catharine, I entreat you, if it be God's will to take me to himself, to submit yourself to His will. Only trust firmly in God's word and you will have a sure protection against the devil and against all slanderers."

He lay back breathing so heavily that it seemed almost like the death rattle. A few moments later he turned to them again and asked: "Where is my beloved Hansichen?"

The child was brought and laughed joyously at his father, who stroked its warm rosy cheeks with his cold white hand while the pale lips faltered a blessing: "Poor child, I commend my beloved Catharine and you, beloved little one, to the dear, good God. You will have nothing, I leave nothing behind, no earthly wealth; but God has enough, and I heartily thank him that it was his will that I should be poor and a beggar on the earth. I cannot leave house or money to my wife and child, but them to Thee, O! God, as Thou givest them to me. Thou, who hast all th-

nourish, cherish and guide them as Thou hast nourished, cherished and guided me, O! Father, defender of the widow and the orphan."

Catharine's heart was full of grief, and the unsearchable counsels of God tried her spirit sorely. Two years only had she enjoyed the great happiness of being the wife of this man and resting beneath the shelter of his greatness. Now she must stand alone, a widow with a helpless infant. When she looked at herself and her child, she was ready to sink, but when she looked at her husband and heard his words she found strength not only to endure in silence, but even to answer the sufferer. She bent tenderly over him and said, though her heart throbbed heavily: "Dear Doctor, if it is God's will, I would rather know that you were with him than with me. Yet it is not alone I and my child who need you, but all Christian people. Do not, then, my dearest husband, disquiet yourself about me. I commend you to God, praying and trusting that He will have you in his holy keeping." These words seemed to encourage the bystanders, for the physician who had given up all hope now ordered warm applications and rubbing of the whole body to be again tried. Love and friendship strove together to preserve this dear life and many a prayer went up to the throne of God for Luther.

The answer of heavenly pity came, "See, he shall not die, but live." The color of life awoke upon the death-like countenance, and a warm perspiration stood out on the forehead of the sick man. The physician approached Mistress Catharine: "He lives! he lives!" and almost overcome by the suddenness of the joyful news, the faithful wife fell at the feet of the man to whom God had shown the means to bring her husband to life again.

Yes, the bodily life was restored, but the soul was still—as Luther himself expressed it—tossed to and fro, and sorely bruised between Christ and Belial. Then God sent him an angel of consolation which was an angel of terror for the rest of Wittenberg; but what depressed others, comforted Dr. Martin. That

which shook the faith of others and caused them almost to despair, quickened the faith of the harassed man and gave him a hero's trust in God.

Through the gates of Wittenberg came the rider on the pale horse with the naked destroying sword, the terror of terrors, the Plague.

All were as though paralysed with fear. A command came from the elector to the University, enjoining professors and students to fly to Jena. All obeyed in haste—except one. The pride of the University, the first among the professors, remained in the Augustinian convent and replied to the Elector's anxiety with a holy trust, "I remain here, I may not depart!" A new injunction in the shape of an earnest entreaty from the elector came to him; they could not do without him in Jena, but the answer was the same, "I remain here, I may not depart!"

All were stricken with deadly fear, the most effective helper of the plague; the most fearful were soonest attacked. Luther knew not fear; he remembered the Saviour's words: "A good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep; but an hireling seeth the wolf coming and fleeth."

With Bugenhagen, the town pastor, and Rörer, the chaplain, who had remained with him, he went where the sick lay imploring for mercy, and the dying needed the last consolations of religion. The plague-stricken died in his arms, he was in the midst of death, but nothing can hurt the faithful shepherd. The more freely he spent his bodily strength, the more richly spiritual strength was given to him, the dark shadows fled away, the devil had no more power over him, and clear and bright shone forth the sun of his soul—Jesus Christ.

Truly, in those days God helped him often to snatch from death his prey, here to strengthen the timid and drive away the fear of the pestilence, by speaking of trust in God, there to rebuke the presumption which, tempting God, despised natural remedies for the sickness and mocked at contagion. Sometimes he must combat the belief that a man might rid himself of the plague by communicating it to others, and again strongly rebuke those who, with fiendish wickedness,

went into houses as yet untouched, because it angered them that any should escape.

Luther did not once pause to think whether he ought not to preserve a life dear to the Church at large, which might be destroyed by the plague. He trusted himself to God with the same calmness as he had ever done, and went into the resorts of the deadly pestilence with the same unmoved face as into the pulpit or the lecture room.

Nor did he content himself with fulfilling the duties of pastor and physician among the sick and dying, but found time to write a letter of consolation to the Christian people at Halle on the death of Winkel, a preacher of the Gospel, slain by a Romish dagger, to labor at his commentary on the prophet Zechariah, and to prepare for a contemplated parochial visitation.

Thus faithful at his post, this prophet of the Most High and light of the Christian Church, remained a true shepherd of the flock at Wittenberg, shaming his enemies, who could not but see that his life answered to his teaching.

Near him stood, the while, a true heroine, the wife who had given him her heart. Not only did she wait upon him faithfully, refreshing the weary one with gentlest care, but she assisted him in tending the sick and bravely opened the doors of her household, hitherto so marvelously spared, to receive those who fled thither for refuge. The wife of the physician Schurf, who with her family had sought shelter in Luther's house, fell sick and the dreaded plague spot appeared on her foot. Ere long Fräulein Margaret von Mochau, whom Luther had also taken in, was likewise laid low. Catharine went from one couch to the other, forgetful altogether of herself, and help from on high was given to aid her in her labors of love.

At this time came news of the death of a dear friend, the wife of the deacon Römer, who had fallen a victim, together with her new-born child, to the destroyer. Catharine trembled, for she knew that she herself stood in like peril, and Luther also could not repress his fear. This new storm threatened to break the

sturdy oak. Bugenhagen, who with his family was also under Luther's roof, sought in vain to strengthen and comfort his friend, for Luther could perceive that his wife grew daily weaker, and that Hans was drooping also.

Yet God comforts us better than men can do. On Dec. 10, Dr. Martin stood by his wife's bedside, thanking God who had preserved both mother and child, and holding out to Hans who was now quite well again, the little new-comer, he said: "See, Hans, God has given you a little sister!"

Now came winter with its icy storms, and drove far thence the destroying angel. The survivors breathed once more freely, and the fugitives began to return. Luther and his Catharine prostrated themselves before God, and prayed thus: "Thou art God who doest wonders, who hast made known thy power and goodness towards us; in so many households there are fewer members, but to ours is one more added."

To his friend Justus Jonas, Luther wrote: "God has given me a daughter, my dear little Elizabeth, and has delivered me from the anxiety which I felt about my Catharine. The plague was in my house, but God protected and saved us! I rejoice and give thanks to God, for now the plague is dead and buried."

The friends who had returned home flocked in to see for themselves that the man of God was still living, and had his family still about him. They rejoiced at the sight, finding in the place of the bowed and dejected man whom they had left, one restored in mind and body, who greeted them with sparkling eyes: "As dying, and behold we live!"

CHAPTER XIV.—LOSS AND GAIN.

A short distance from Wittenberg, near the Elsterthor, is a well, which is shown at this day. It is called Luther's well, from the fact that Luther dug it in the year 1520. The miner's son had a keen scent for the metals and jewels of the earth.

As the neighborhood of the well was very pleasant on account of the invigorating air, and the green trees and the

murmur of the distant Elbe, Dr. Martin built a pretty little house near the well in the year 1526. Catharine's skilful hand furnished and adorned the inside in as comfortable a manner as possible, so that time passed pleasantly here, and the frequent presence of friends showed that they appreciated Mistress Luther's pains. Often too, Luther, Melancthon, Cruziger and Auerhahn sat in this peaceful quiet, talking over the translation of the New Testament, and here, in the presence of certain learned citizens the fourth chapter of the Gospel of St. John, relating to Jacob's well, was translated. It was a bright, warm day in the May of 1528. Nature had put on her brightest beauty, the trees were clothed in foliage of deepest green, and the wild and garden flowers vied with each other, which should show the most luxuriant bloom and offer the most tempting food to bees and butterflies. On every bough birds whistled and sang, and even the horses of the peasants toiling in their harness neighed merrily on this joyous spring day.

The wide open door of the house by the well at Elsterthor showed a pretty picture, Dr. Martin sitting within and playing upon his lute. The spring had lightened his heart, and when all nature was rejoicing Dr. Martin could not be silent. Mistress Catharine sat beside him, her baby at her breast, sometimes listening to the tunes of the lute, sometimes lost in admiration of the beauty of the spring tide.

When at length the doctor ceased his brilliant fantasies and fell into a melody which he had himself arranged for his beloved Hansichen, Catharine softly hummed the air, nodding her head in time; and even little Hans, who was playing with a hobby horse made by Wolfgang out of a stick, looked up attentively for he already knew that this was his tune. The boy was now about two years old and a fine, handsome child, who could manage his wooden horse skilfully and make himself understood, even if the words were sometimes a little crooked. His hobby horse was his best beloved toy, and it was a pleasure to see how the fresh child's fancy

put life into the inanimate wood and treated it like a living creature. The horse occupied a special stall made with three boards in a corner of the room, received hay and fodder every night; and when it was sick must take medicine, and be petted and consoled. The parents looked with pleasure at this fanciful amusement of their child, and Catharine said to her husband: "Hansichen will be, God willing, the comfort of our old age." Looking down upon the infant in her arms, she went on: "When I look at our beloved little Elizabeth, I call to mind at once the injunction of the holy apostle to possess as though we possessed not! She is the child of my anxiety, born in sorrow and reared with trembling. See, how pale the little face is, and what dark shadows there are about the eyes."

Luther bent down and stroked the child's hand. "Dearest wife, every word of the holy apostle has its due weight not only with respect to our frail little one, but to all our children, that we should hold them as though we possessed them not. God has but lent them to us that we might rear them for Him, and He may take them again when He will."

A look of deep pain passed over Catharine's face. "You are right, dear Doctor; yet one would rather see them come than go. Would it not break our hearts to part with one of them. Ah, my precious Elizabeth, my darling child." — Her tears fell fast as she broke off to kiss the pale brow. Luther too was moved, and it was a relief to him to see Melancthon and the Reichenbachs coming towards them.

"We thought so," cried Mistress Elsa "that we should find you by the well, when we did not find you at home. What a lovely May!"

The friends sat down. Mistress Elsa beside Catharine, the two men by Dr. Martin. "Well," said the Doctor, "you have a fine sense of smell, good friends, to have found out already what his gracious highness has sent me. I too can boast of quick perceptions since I felt that some of my friends would come to the spring to-day. We will have some of this gracious present brought hither."

He pointed as he spoke to a corner in which stood a cask with a large stone jug beside it. "This holds Spanish wine to refresh Dr. Martin, as the courier brought word."

"Our elector is a kind man," said Reichenbach" and has a just judgment. Therefore, Dr. Martin, you cannot do better than to follow such good advice and drink all the wine yourself."

Luther, however, had already filled the jug: "What's that, Reichenbach? How could the wine strengthen me if I drank it alone? A joy is doubled when it is shared, and wine shared with others does one twice as much good."

He passed the jug to the syndic who nevertheless refused. Melancthon looked at him significantly and said, "Take it, Reichenbach, the Doctor is 45 years old, you will never cure him of this habit."

When the jug had passed round, Luther entered into conversation with his intimate friends showing more and more how his spirit had been renewed until one could scarcely imagine that he could ever be melancholy or sad.

Towards evening others joined, burghers of Wittenberg who had come out to take a walk for pleasure. Luther invited all to enter as his guests. When the supply of chairs failed, cloaks were spread upon the ground and the talk turned upon all matters from the affairs of Wittenberg to those of the heavenly kingdom, as chance directed, until Wolfgang came with warm wraps for the Doctor and an express injunction for him to return home before nightfall.

Luther obeyed the message, and the little company returned together to the town.

The Erfurt roses in Luther's garden bloomed luxuriantly this summer, and gladdened not only the heart of the planter and of those whom he constrained to admire with him God's handiwork wrought in this garden, but rejoiced those also, to whom he sent great bunches of them. Still more did Luther rejoice when he entered the nursery and saw the faint roses blossom on little Elizabeth's cheeks. It is true that the physician, Dr. Augustin Schurf, smiled somewhat sadly at the father's joy, but the latter did not

notice it and augured the best for the child's health. Alas! death lurked beneath those roses. Soon they faded again and with hearts doubly rent by this disappointed hope, the parents stood by their dying child and marked how bitter death can be, for the child struggled long and hard. They did not cease to pray, although often the prayer was but a sigh. But the Lord had spoken, "Give me the child again."

Death was close at hand, and Luther, collecting all his strength, said, "Lord, Thy will be done," but Catharine cried out, "Oh Heavenly Father, is it not possible that this cup should pass from us. It is so bitter — I cannot drink it!" Luther could not look on his wife's agony, his own tears burst forth and he wept like a child. This sight had a wonderful effect upon Catharine. She had been utterly cast down, but when she saw her husband's grief, God gave her strength to comfort him, and when Luther had received comfort, he was able to give it again, especially when the lid of the coffin was closed and the little form was borne away.

He walked behind the coffin through the weeping people and at the grave strengthened himself and all present by his comforting words. Then indeed he learned what a treasure the Word of God is, working most powerfully when the soul is in darkness, just as a diamond sparkles more brightly when it is lying on the dark earth.

Wolfgang made a little wooden cross, which he set up at the grave, and the father wrote upon it: "Hic dormit Elizabeth, filiola Martini Luther † Anno 1528." Here lies Elizabeth, daughter of Martin Luther.

Catharine's mind was a thoughtful one, and grief took deep hold of her. Yet she learned to find one blessing in sorrow which she had never before known, that her household, the servants as well as the boarders who lived in a wing apart, showed more zeal and devotion than ever before, as if each would do all in his power to comfort the sorrowing mother. Catharine was sincerely grateful and repaid them with love as all that she could do.

the captives by the river Chebar,' in the land of the Chaldeans. Ezekiel's prophecies are not easily understood, but many chapters evidently refer to the destruction of Jerusalem by the King of Babylon, and the cause of this destruction is set forth as the sins, especially the idolatry of the Jews.

Daniel was also among the captives in Babylon. He was taken prisoner when quite a youth, probably under twenty years of age. His history, as far as it is known, is recorded in the book of Daniel. He lived to the end of the captivity, but was too old to return to Jerusalem. It is generally believed that he died at Susa. The prophet Joel is understood to speak of the Chaldeans, when he says, 'A nation is come up upon my land, strong, and without number, whose teeth are the teeth of a lion, and he hath the cheek-teeth of a great lion. He hath laid my vine waste, and barked my fig tree: he hath made it clean bare, and cast it away; the branches thereof are made white.' The book of Haggai was written to encourage the people to re-build the temple after the return from Babylon.

Zechariah was also born during the captivity, and accompanied the exiles when they were permitted, by the decree

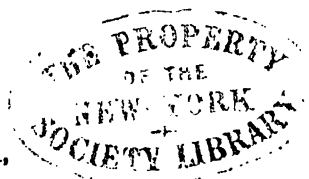
of Cyrus, to go forth to their own land. In the book of Zechariah we have many references to the captivity, and some graphic descriptions of the sorrows of the people as well as of their sins. In the first chapter and the twelfth verse, it is written: 'Then the angel of the Lord answered and said, O Lord of hosts, how long wilt Thou not have mercy on Jerusalem and on the cities of Judah, against which Thou hast had indignation these threescore and ten years?' In the next chapter the daughter of Zion is addressed as thou 'that dwellest with the daughter of Babylon;' and God is represented as saying, 'that he who touches her touches the apple of His eye.' Jerusalem is to be restored. Old men and old women are yet to dwell in it, and it is to be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof. The promises of good things are mingled with prophecies concerning the coming of Christ, and the opening of the fountain in the house of David for sins and for uncleanness. The Jews are addressed as prisoners of hope, and invited to turn to 'the stronghold.' In the day of restitution, which is typical of the restoration of man from sin, 'there shall be upon the bells of the horses HOLINESS TO THE LORD.' (Day of Rest.)

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CATHARINE VON BORA,

The Wife of Martin Luther.

Translated from the German of Armin Stein, by M. Drisler.



CHAPTER XV.—ALONE.

In a back room, that famous chamber overlooking the ramparts from which Luther had gone forth to attack the papacy, sat Mistress Catharine, alone. The Doctor is not there; five months since he went to the fortress of Coburg, whither the elector had taken him in order to be near the Diet at Augsburg. This city he might not enter on account of the ban of the empire proclaimed

against him, but he remained thus near in order to counsel and strengthen the defenders of the faith.

Although the reformer was often obliged to be absent in the performance of his duty, Catharine could never accustom herself to the loneliness. The crown and joy were stripped from her life when she could not see her husband's face and hear his voice. She did not live for herself; she lived only for her

husband, and through him. All that gave life and color to her existence was from him. She first learned what life might be when she came to sit in the shadow of the great man. We say advisedly "in the shadow," for she never wished to shine before the world as the wife of a celebrated man; but to be overshadowed by his greatness, to take what she needed from his fulness—that she esteemed her most enviable privilege, and forgetting herself to serve as a faithful wife. Even to do him menial service seemed to her the holiest duty, and in this she found her best reward.

Her husband, whom she had thus made happy, praised her, therefore, in all ways.

"I have a true and pious wife, in whom the heart of her husband doth safely trust," as Solomon says. She wastes nothing. She is kind and obedient to me in all things, more so even than I could have hoped. I could have no more obedient wife if I had carved one out of stone. I love my Catharine more than myself. I would lay down my life for her and my children. I esteem her more than the kingdom of France or the city of Venice, and would not change her for the wealth of Croesus. A thrifty, loving, God-fearing wife, with whom one can live in peace, is God's best gift, for to her you may entrust your goods and all that you have."

Thus were these two of one mind and belonged to each other, as two halves to a whole. Can we wonder that the house should seem to Catharine deserted when her husband was absent, although there was bustle and stir enough among the servants and other inmates? Even the brethren Peter and Hieronymus Weller, whom her husband's care had left in the house to protect and aid her, could not fill the blank. There was but one Luther in the world, just as there is but one sun in heaven. When the sun sets it is night, nor can the moon and all the thousands of stars compensate for its absence.

Catharine had some needlework in her hand—Hanschen's little coat—the sleeves of which needed mending; but her mind was not on her work. At

length she laid it aside, and going to the chest turned over some papers till she found a portfolio of buff leather, containing the letters which she had received from Coburg and Augsburg. Although she knew them almost by heart, she read them yet again; and a quiet joy dawned on her face, like the mild radiance of the setting sun, for these letters were the visible testimony of the happy knowledge which dwelt in her inmost soul that Dr. Luther loved his Catharine with a true and perfect love, and that she was honored by other worthy men.

She could not forbear a smile when she took the last letter in her hand, for its tone was so sportive that it was evident the Doctor liked his "abode in the kingdom of the birds," as he said. The letter ran thus:

"Grace and peace in Christ, my dearest Catharine. We have arrived safely at our Sinai, but we will make a Tabor of it and build upon it three tabernacles; one for the Psalter, one for the Prophets, and one for Æsop. But first your old lover will write to you, in order that you may know that Dr. Martin has become a king, or at the very least a prince, and lives in a great castle, with thirty servants in gay liveries, like parquets; twelve watchmen and two horn blowers on the battlements. Otherwise it is very quiet here and favorable for study, if there were not so much noise kept up outside in the air. There is a grove like a little forest just beneath my window, in which the crows and jackdaws have convened a diet. There is so much flying to and fro, and such an incessant chattering day and night, that they all seem as if they were mad and drunk. Young and old, all talk at once, till I wonder how breath and voice can hold out so long; and I would willingly know if there are any of these noble and knightly cavaliers with you, for it seems that they are gathered here from the four quarters of the globe. I have not yet seen their emperor, but the nobles and courtiers are continually flitting by before my eyes, not in costly clothing, it is true, for all wear the same simple dress of black, and all are gray-eyed and sing the

same song, only with a difference between the voices of young and old, great and small.

They do not care about great palaces and saloons, for their throne room is vaulted with the fair, wide-spreading heavens, and its floor is the field strewn with beautiful green branches, and the walls extend as far as the ends of the earth. They have no need of steeds and armor, for they have feathered wheels with which they can fly from a gun and escape threatened vengeance. They are great lords, but I do not yet know what they have resolved upon. As far as I could gather from an interpreter, they have planned a fierce assault upon wheat, oats, hay and every kind of grain, and many a knight will win his spurs and great deeds will be done. Here I sit at the diet and see and hear with much pleasure that princes and lords sing and live so harmoniously with all other orders. It gives me especial delight to see in what a knightly fashion they strut about, sharpen their beaks and shoulder their arms, that they may win honor against corn and oats. We wish them good luck and that they may all be impaled on a hedge, for I hold that these are in reality sophists and papists with their sermons and writings, and I should like to have them all before me at once, that I might hear their charming voices and discourses and might see how useful people are, who destroy everything on the face of the earth and then chatter about it for a long time.

To-day we heard the first nightingale; they would not trust April. Hitherto it has been charming weather, without rain, except for a little while yesterday. Perhaps it has been different with you.

The Lord have you in His keeping. Guide the house well.

Given from the diet of the Grain-Turks, April 28, 1530."

Catharine laid the letter carefully back in the portfolio, and took out another written in a different hand. "How glad I am," she thought, "that his friends remember me so kindly." She began to read the letter which Melancthon had written to her after his arrival at Augsburg.

"The grace of God be with you, good Mistress Catharine. Know hereby that we have arrived safely at Augsburg, God be praised, and have left your good husband at Coburg, whence he has doubtless written to you. I hope shortly to join him there, and entreat that you will write to let me know how you do. If I can serve you in any way I will do so diligently, as I am bound to do. Both Dr. George Brück and Dr. Christian Baier, who are to read the evangelical Confession of Faith before the Diet, greet you and wish you all good. The Lord keep you!

PHILIP MELANCTHON."

AUGSBURG, Wednesday after St. Walpurgis' Day.

A few lines were added: "Dear fellow sponsor, I wish you, little Hansichen, baby Lena and cousin Lena much happiness. Kiss my children for me.

JUSTUS JONAS."

Last of all came these words: "I, Johann Agricola, of Eisleben, wish you well, dear Mistress Luther."

On this letter which, like the others, was a little worn, two tears fell and made a blot. "How everything, even what seems dark, has its bright side," murmured Catharine. "I thought this separation from my husband so great a misfortune, and now these letters come as some compensation, for they show me that some love and remember me."

There was another letter in a strange hand. Veit Dietrich, one of the boarders, who, together with Luther's nephew, Cyriacus Kaufmann, had accompanied the Doctor to take care of and assist him, wrote in answer to a letter which Mistress Catharine had sent to Coburg soon after Lena's birthday, together with a picture of the child.

"In the name of God, greeting, dear Mistress Luther. You did a good work when you sent the picture to our good Doctor. He is greatly delighted with it, and has hung it over the wall opposite the table, for we eat now in the prince's room. When the Doctor first saw it he did not recognize it for a long time. 'Lena is not so black,' he said. But now it pleases him greatly, and the longer he looks at it the more likeness

he sees to Lena. She is very like Hansichen, especially about eyes, nose and mouth. Dear Mistress Luther, I entreat that you will not be anxious about the Doctor. He is now quite well again, although he has suffered much, not only from anxiety and bodily pain, but he was greatly overcome by the loss of his father. One whole day he shut himself up with his Psalter, and wept alone; yet all this he bore and conquered, as became a knightly hero. I cannot enough admire the wonderful steadfastness and cheerfulness, the faith and hopefulness of your husband in such difficult times. He is sustained by an incessant study of God's Word, nor does he let any day pass without spending at least three full hours in prayer, often the best hours of the day and those most convenient for study. Once I was so fortunate as to hear him pray. What faith was in his words! He prays to God so reverently and yet with as much earnestness and confidence as any one would speak to a friend. 'I know,' he said, 'that Thou art our God and Father, and therefore I know that Thou will put the enemies of Thy children to shame. If Thou dost it not, then is the danger Thine and ours also; this is Thy work; we are come to it because it was Thy will, therefore Thou wilt defend it and bring it to pass.' I heard him praying thus aloud and clearly, though I was at some distance, and my heart burned within me as he talked with God, so reverently, so trustfully, and in so child-like a manner, and in the midst of his prayer urged the promises of God in the Psalms, as though he were certain that his prayers would be heard and granted. You see, therefore, dear Mistress Luther, how great and excellent a husband you have, for whom you may well thank God.

What are little Hansichen and Lena doing? Kiss them for me. I commend you and good cousin Lena to God. The Doctor and your cousin Cyriacus send you greeting.

VEIT DIETRICH."

After a little further search in the portfolio, Catharine read the following letter, written in her husband's bold, large hand:

"Grace and peace in Christ, my dearest Catharine. The messenger goes so soon that I have only time to write a few lines. Tell Dr. Pommer and all other friends that I will soon write more. We have no news from Augsburg, but expect tidings every hour. There are rumors that our adversaries' answer is to be openly read, but they have not been willing to give a copy of it to our friends, that the latter might reply. I do not know if the report is true, but if they are so afraid of daylight our friends will not remain long.

Since St. Lawrence's day I have been quite well, and have had no return of the buzzing in my head. This makes me more inclined to write, as hitherto the buzzing has troubled me greatly. Greet each and all. More another time. God be with you. Amen. Pray with faith, for the work is well begun and God will help. Given on the Sunday after St. Lawrence's day, Aug. 14, 1530.

MARTIN LUTHER."

Catharine had stitched to this note another received at the same time, that she might keep them together.

"Grace and peace in Christ, my dearest Catharine. As I was closing my letter news came to me from Augsburg; and I detained the messenger, that he might bear them to you. Know then that our affairs at Augsburg stand nearly the same as I wrote in another letter. Let Peter Weller or Dr. Pommer read it to you, and God prosper what he has graciously begun. Amen. I can write no more at present, as the messenger is waiting impatiently. Greet all the dear ones, especially Hansichen and his preceptor, to whom I will shortly write. Greet cousin Lena and all others in the house. We are eating ripe grapes, although it has been very wet this month. God be with you all. Amen.

From the wilderness on the feast of the Assumption, Aug. 15, 1530.

MARTIN LUTHER."

Now, folded by itself in a pink paper, came the best of all, that letter of Luther's to his little son, which we have

already seen. Catharine rejoiced inwardly as she re-read this precious letter, though the tears rose to her eyes as she softly breathed a prayer to heaven for the great, the noble, the only Dr. Martin.

CHAPTER XVI.—THE INN OF GOD.

While Catharine was still busy re-folding the letters, laying them back neatly and fastening the portfolio with a scarlet ribbon, Else Kaufmann entered. This was an orphan niece of Luther's, whom he took into his house, together with her sister Lena and her brother Cyriacus, at the same time that he received the son of another sister, Hans Polner, a student of divinity. Else came to say that there was a stranger without who gave his name as Urban Rhegius, and asked to see Mistress Luther, saying he had just come from Coburg.

With a joyful terror at this name, Catharine hastened to the door yard, and found in the Doctor's favorite seat under the great pear tree a well dressed man who, when he perceived her, rose, and taking off his cap, approached her:

"God greet you, good mistress!" he began with a strange accent, that recalled that of Hieronymus Baumgartner. "I esteem myself fortunate thus to make the acquaintance of the wife of him whom I saw lately face to face, and I rejoice greatly to be able to render him a little service in bringing you his greetings on my way through Wittenberg."

"How is my dear husband?" coloring with eager joy.

"He is well and full of courage. In his great goodness and kindness he bestowed upon me a whole day of his precious time. Never, in all my life, did I enjoy a day more, for Dr. Luther is so deep a theologian that it would not be easy at any time to find his equal. I have always thought highly of him, but now more than ever since I have seen and heard what no one can write or explain in words. Luther's books show what his mind is, but one who meets him and hears him speak of holy things out of the fulness of his apostolic mind is constrained to acknowledge that Luther

is too great to be judged by any petty wise-acre. I feel and know that he is a theologian for the whole world."

As Mistress Luther stood in pretty confusion and could not at once find words with which to answer, Rhegius looked about him.

"This, then, is the place in which he lives, the man of God, the refuge of all who suffer persecution for the Gospel's sake? Tell me, worthy Mistress Luther, how with your small means you manage to feed and clothe so many? I could not believe my ears when the good Doctor told me his whole income was but 200 gulden."

Catharine smiled and pointed to the barns and yard. "Do you hear those sounds, good sir? If kitchen and cellar are empty, the barn and garden must help fill them, though even this aid would not suffice for all those who gather each day around our table, did not the kindness of pious friends assist us with contributions. Our good elector is especially liberal to us. Yet my husband has peculiar ideas upon this subject; he often refuses a present because he fears lest God should send him temporal rewards, while he desires only the heavenly. The elector once wished to give him some shares in a mine, but he refused them, saying, the devil would never allow him any success in mining, and that others might suffer with him. Now that every one knows this trait of the Doctor's, whoever wishes to make him a present comes to me. I do not refuse, but rather accept gladly the loving gifts, since it is only to use them for the poor. And yet, though I practice the utmost economy, I have not been able to keep the Doctor from contracting debts to the amount of several hundred gulden, which he has incurred chiefly through standing security for others and pawning the plate presented to him, so that his good friends, Lucas Cranach and Dr. Bugenhagen will not let the Doctor stand security any more, as his kindness has been so often abused."

Rhegius, who had listened with great interest, now pointed to the wing of the dwelling. "What house is that?"

"Our boarders live there," answered Catharine.

"Why, is the whole house full, Mistress Luther?"

"Yes, I have a long table every day. Those who are able pay me the cost of their keep, but most of them compensate me with a 'God will reward you;' and that contents us, as till now we have always had enough to eat, and have not suffered want. I would willingly take nothing from any one, if it were possible to manage without it."

"Are you about to put up a building, Mistress Luther? I see a heap of tiles and bricks in the corner."

"Oh, our house is large enough, but it is old and decaying, so that the town council gave us those building materials, which the Doctor accepted as a just recompense for his services during the plague, and also because he never received any remuneration for his preaching."

The stranger looked at Mistress Luther with ever-increasing wonder, and he murmured something that she did not catch. To turn the conversation she said:

"Your accent, sir, is so unusual—may I ask from whence you come?"

"I am a Suabian by birth," answered Rhegius; "born at Langenargen, on the Lake of Constance, and educated as a theologian, but an insignificant one, indeed, not worthy to loose the shoe strings of Dr. Martin, yet desirous to do my allotted task in the vineyard of the Lord."

"Pray, be seated, Herr Rhegius," entreated Catharine, "and I will summon other members of our household, who will be glad to hear you speak of the Doctor. Meanwhile, I will prepare some refreshment for you."

So saying Catharine hastened towards the wing of the house, whence she returned a few moments later with the brothers Peter and Hieronymus Weller, Hansichen's instructors. While these two sat down with the stranger underneath the pear tree and began to ply him with questions, Catharine went into the cellar to bring up a jug of home-brewed ale, and then hastened to the

kitchen to get ready some eggs and bacon.

She had not finished her preparations when Else came to tell her of an arrival.

"Mistress Luther, there is a woman without who startled me—I know not whether I fear or pity her. She looks like a queen and yet seems so wretched, that merely to look at her is enough to make one weep. She asked me if Dr. Luther were at home; and when I said no, became yet more dejected; then suddenly looked up and asked if Mistress Luther were kind to the poor. When I said yes, she asked to see you."

Catharine felt somewhat uneasy at this strange tale; nevertheless, leaving the half-cooked food to Else's care, she betook herself to the large hall.

In the doorway she stopped suddenly at the sight of a woman, whose presence acted upon her like a spell. A tall, majestic figure, with a countenance of mingled dignity and softness, yet with a certain air of command, and over all a veil of unspeakable sadness, met the gaze of Mistress Luther, and wrought upon her as previously upon Else, so that involuntarily tears sprang to her eyes.

The stranger seemed to expect some words of welcome or inquiry, and her soft, beautiful eyes met those of Catharine with a pleading air. "By what name may I call you?" asked Catharine, holding out her hand to the stranger.

The latter drew slowly near as she answered in a gentle and feeling, though very weary voice:

"My father sits upon the throne of Denmark, and my husband wears an electoral crown, yet I have no place to lay my head."

Catharine drew back in great surprise. "Can it be? The unhappy wife of the elector of Brandenburg?"

"Does my presence make you afraid?" asked the stranger, with the quick alarm peculiar to the unfortunate. "If so, I will go hence, although I grieve sorely to forego the hope of a shelter under the roof of the great reformer. I have incurred the displeasure of my husband for the Gospel's sake; and because I revere Dr. Luther's teaching as I do the Word

of God, the elector threatened me with imprisonment."

Catharine's first impulse was to clasp the unhappy woman to her breast, but natural timidity in the presence of the daughter of royalty restrained her. She contented herself with taking the trembling hand in her own, as she whispered: "This house is open to all the weary and heavy laden, most of all to those who suffer for the Gospel's sake."

A gleam of joy brightened the face of the unhappy one as, scarcely restraining her tears, she answered: "May He who said, 'Inasmuch as ye did it to the least of my brethren, ye did it unto Me,' reward you."

With a beating heart, after excusing herself to Herr Rhegius, Catharine led the elector's wife to a quiet room overlooking the garden, and soon the winning, gracious manner of the guest overcame the timidity of the hostess, so that they talked with each other like true friends.

Now Catharine learned with exactness the truth of rumors which had reached her long since, that the elector's wife had incurred her husband's displeasure for the Gospel's sake, and by secretly partaking of the communion in both kinds, had so excited his wrath that he swore the heretic and blasphemer should never again see the light of day. To prevent the commission of such a crime, the wife fled for protection to the elector of Saxony at Torgau, who assigned her as a dwelling a quiet castle at Lichtenburg, on the Elbe. She was very grateful for this kindness, but felt herself in this seclusion becoming dry and withered for want of spiritual food. She came, therefore, quietly to Wittenberg, that in Luther's house she might drink of the living waters, and thereby obtain strength and refreshment for her soul.

Catharine warmly expressed her regret at her husband's prolonged absence, but entreated the elector's wife to stay until the Doctor could himself break to her the Bread of Life.

Deeply moved, the noble lady fell upon the neck of the Doctor's wife; and this mute embrace was the seal of a warm, mutual friendship, thus springing

up between two hearts which, however different their outward conditions might be, beat as one in their striving after the one thing needful. In daily intercourse with the elector's wife, Catharine learned that report had not exaggerated the gentleness, the humility, the noble nature and profound piety of Elizabeth von Brandenburg. The latter was no less attracted by Mistress Luther, the upright, straightforward, loving woman, whose childlike simplicity and gentle bearing were joined to a mind and spirit of such strength, which could rule with steadfast looks and thorough oversight her large household and servants. The elector's wife took pleasure in rendering assistance, and delighted especially in the care of the children. Good Aunt Lena willingly retreated into the background, nor did she show any jealousy when ungrateful little Hansichen forgot with his new "Aunt Elizabeth" all the love Aunt Lena had shown him previously.

Catharine no longer felt lonely. All her leisure time was occupied in waiting upon the noble lady and comforting her, an occupation which gave a fresh impulse to her daily life. She felt that this was a high and holy labor of love, and grew happier the more she perceived by looks and words of her guest that she had found in this inn of God rest for her soul, and dawn after a night of darkness.

A week later came a letter from Luther at Coburg, to "dear Catharine," saying he would soon return and bring Hansichen a sugar book, which cousin Cyriacus of Nuremberg had brought from that beautiful garden of which we have heard before. At this news the two women embraced each other, and both hearts beat with joyful, eager anticipation.

CHAPTER XVII.—A FESTIVAL.

"Bring the vessels, Sibylla, the beer is ready," said Mistress Catharine to one of the maids who was helping her in the brew house. "This time we have a fine brewing which the Doctor will enjoy, as the malt which the elector sent was specially good. Where are Dorothea and

Brigitta? Tell them to make haste to help us finish before sunrise, for we have a busy day before us."

At this moment Wolfgang came limping by, stretching his limbs and looking only half awake. At Mistress Catharine's command he lent a helping hand, so that all the vessels stood filled with the clear brown liquid as six o'clock rang out from the church tower.

It was a sultry morning in August, in the year 1532. Gray clouds covered the heavens and tempered the heat of the sun, which for some days past had been excessive. Fido, the Spitz dog, stretched himself upon his couch, seemingly disinclined to quit it. Even the doves sat drooping with folded wings upon the roof. Nevertheless, in the court yard of Luther's house, there was a busy stir—something wonderful must be going forward.

Mistress Catharine hastened from the brew house to the cattle yard, where two maid servants were wringing the necks of some fat pullets. Thence she went to the kitchen, to see what progress Else and Lena were making with the vegetables.

When Mistress Catharine was satisfied that all was in trim, she set out with Wolfgang and a boy, passing through the yet quiet streets towards the orchard which Luther owned, in the neighborhood of the pork market.

Here, in the shade of the thick willows, was a little fish pond. It was soon seen what was concealed in these depths, for the two men spread out a net as wide as the pond and drew it through the water, each man taking one side of the pool.

Before long, Catharine, who meanwhile had picked a basketful of pears from the lower branches of a tree, had a tubful of fish of different kinds: pike, loach, trout, carp, eel-ponts and tench.

"Such a dish will please the Doctor," said she with a pleased smile; "he is very fond of fish, and such a dish is especially suitable for to-day's feast."

"May it please you, Mistress Luther," interrupted the boy, "I do not rightly know what to-day's feast means."

"Do you not know, Daniel, that peace

has been declared in Germany?" asked Catharine, surprised in her turn. On the way home she explained to the boy what had been done at the Diet at Nuremberg on July 23rd; that the evangelical princes had come to terms with the emperor, and promised to help him against the Turks on condition that he would cease to oppose the spread of the Gospel until matters could be finally adjusted in a general council of the Church.

Meanwhile, they had come to the gate of the court yard. As they entered, they met Master Peter, the barber, who came every morning to shave the Doctor, just coming away. He hastily approached Mistress Catharine, bade her good morning and asked if her husband were not at home—he had searched in all the rooms for him in vain. Catharine became very uneasy and thoughtful at this: "Did you knock at his study door?"

"I knocked three times at the door, but no one answered, and I never dare to enter without leave."

"Surely," began Catharine, "he must have sat all night over his books again, for yesterday he was very silent at table and seemed wholly absorbed."

She went to her husband's sleeping room—his bed stood untouched. Now she hastened to his study and knocked, but no one answered. Again—but all was still. A third time she knocked, and hearing no stir she opened the door and rushed into the room, the air of which seemed to her close and heavy as she entered. There sat the Doctor motionless and silent, bending over a book. A little black bread and half a herring stood near him on the table. "Doctor!" cried Catharine anxiously, suddenly stopping near the table. Luther did not move. She went up to him, touched him with her hand; then, stooping, brought her face of mingled anxiety and reproach close to his. Now, for the first time, Luther stirred and looked up in surprise.

"Dear Doctor," cried Catharine in tears, why have you again alarmed us so greatly? Why do you act thus?"

This question at last thoroughly

roused Luther. A shade passed over his face, and he pointed to the Hebrew Bible open before him.

"Why do you complain, Catharine? Do you think I have something evil before me? Do you not know that I must work while it is yet day? For the night cometh wherein no man can work."

He spoke these words almost sternly, but Catharine knew by the tone of his voice that the anger was not earnest. She stroked with quiet happiness the hand that labored incessantly for all Christendom, and could never do enough. As her glance fell on the half-eaten herring, she asked with a faint smile:

"How is it that with the little food which you eat you have so strong and vigorous a frame that Master Melancthon seems but a boy beside you? But to-day you must allow your wife to care for you and refresh you after your night's labor and fasting, with good food. To-day your friends are invited to rejoice with you over the peace lately concluded."

Luther drew his hand across his forehead. "I had entirely forgotten it, dear Catharine. At dinner I shall be glad indeed among my friends, for Spalatinus has promised to be with us too."

He stood up, and laying his hand gently on his wife's shoulder, said in another, softer tone:

"Dear wife, how faithfully you care for me! Rejoice with me that God gave me so true a helpmeet, who watches so thoughtfully over my health, adapts herself so skilfully to my nature, and bears with my errors and faults so patiently. Dr. Martin would be badly off, indeed, without his Catharine. Gladly, therefore, will I leave you to bear rule in house, kitchen and farm yard, for I am but an unskilful housekeeper, and women are more clever in household matters than men."

Catharine was perplexed and sought to give the conversation another turn by saying: "Master Peter, the barber, is without; may he come in, dear Doctor?"

On Luther's assent, Catharine went away, and the barber, a little, thin man, with inquisitive eyes and a restless

tongue, entered. He greeted the Doctor respectfully, and went immediately to work. While he was rubbing the soap in the basin, Luther asked: "Now, Master Peter, what is your budget to-day?"

Master Peter paused a moment, then answered: "Ah, good Doctor, the last item is that the poor Master Peter does not know how to pray, and would willingly have asked you long ago how such an art may be acquired, for you, as the Master, can well instruct a poor Christian in this matter."

Luther smiled slightly: "Do your work, and then I will teach you."

The barber quickly finished his work, and then awaited impatiently his lesson.

"Sit down here, good Master Peter," began the Doctor, when he had wiped his face with a white towel.

"Do you call praying an art? True, it is an art, but the papists will never learn it, yet any simple Christian may acquire it. See, good Master, if your soul is averse to prayer, you must provoke it by taking your Psalter and sitting down to read in your chamber until your heart is warm within you, and this is best done at break of day or at bed time. Or, take your catechism in your hand and read over the headings piously; this is also a good tinder box with which to kindle a fire in your heart. Although I am an old student of the Holy Scriptures, I live like a child on the Lord's prayer and the Creed, and am nourished by them and can never be satisfied with them. When you are thus excited to prayer, then see that you pray with all your heart. A good barber should have his mind and thoughts and eyes only upon his razor and the hair he is shaving, and neither talk nor look at anything else."

Master Peter returned hearty thanks for the instruction, and was going away when Luther stopped him: "If you have a mind to stay and be present at our morning prayers, it is already time."

He took the Bible and the Catechism from the table and preceded Master Peter to the long hall, where the servants had assembled and awaited their master.

After a hearty good morning, all seated themselves in good order around the long oak table, each in his accustomed place; the Doctor at the head, next him on the right Mistress Catharine; cousin Lena and the two children on the left; the two brothers Hieronymus and Peter Weller, with Wolfgang, and the rest of the boarders who were held as members of the family; and opposite to these the sisters Else and Lena Kaufmann. Below them were the servants.

The master of the house started the tune with his rich, full voice, and high and low voices united in the morning hymn. When Luther had read the 23rd Psalm, all rose and prayed together:

"In the name of the Father, the Son and Holy Ghost. Amen. I thank Thee, Heavenly Father, that Thou hast so graciously kept me from all harm and danger through the night, and I pray Thee that Thou wouldst keep me this day from all evil, that all my ways and acts may please Thee through thy dear Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. I commit myself, my soul and body and all that I have to Thee. Thy Holy Spirit be with me, that the evil one may have no power over me. Amen."

"Now let us hear the catechism," said Luther. "You, Wolfgang, can begin today."

"Wolfgang rose with folded hands and said the first portion, his neighbor next, and so on, until the Doctor's turn came, who, as well as the others, recited his portion like a child.

"Dear Hansichen," asked he of his six-year-old boy: "can you tell where I left off explaining yesterday?"

The answer came at once: "At the end of the ten commandments, father."

"Then pay attention," said Luther, "that you may understand what law is. A created being is justly alarmed at this word, for law menaces transgressors with punishment. This, indeed, is God's purpose; to terrify the sinner with the law, which, as a schoolmaster, justly wields the rod. Yet it must be understood that the law is not merely a schoolmaster, delighting in punishment, but a schoolmaster for Christ; for what sort

of a schoolmaster would he be who merely vexed and punished his scholars without teaching them? Formerly, the schools were prisons and hells, and the schoolmasters tyrants and jailors; the poor children were punished mercilessly, and profited little by what they learned with great labor. The law is not such a taskmaster; though it harasses its scholars, it drives them to Christ. When it has driven them to Christ, its terrors are over and no longer trouble men. If Moses calls me to judgment, I will turn from him and say: 'Away, Moses, Christ is here;' and at the last day Moses will say to me: 'Thou hast rightly understood,' and will be favorable to me. Who is in Christ is free from the law. As Holy Scriptures says: 'Christ is the fulfilling of the law.' He who belongs to Christ is no more under the rod of Moses; he is justified."

Suddenly turning to his wife, the Doctor asked: "Dear Catharine, do you believe that you are holy?" His wife, startled by the unexpected question, did not answer immediately. After a pause she said:

"How can I believe that I am holy. I am a great sinner!"

The Doctor smiled: "See, how the Popish superstition has tormented and possessed the soul, so that she cannot see that a man can only accomplish for himself exterior holiness. Dear Catharine, if you believe that you are baptized and a Christian, then you must believe that you are holy. The Sacrament of Baptism has such force that it takes away our sins; not that we cease to be conscious of them, but they no longer condemn us."

A slight color came to Catharine's cheek, and her eyes thanked the Doctor for so consoling an explanation.

The whole household now rose once more to receive the priestly blessing.

The maid servants now brought in breakfast, which was eaten in silence; then each went about his work.

The Doctor brought his Hebrew Bible from the study, and accompanied by Peter Weller went to the High School, to deliver a lecture on the first book of Moses. Hieronymus took Hansichen

with him, and gave him a reading lesson.

The morning went by, and a long table covered with a white cloth was set under the pear tree, as the Doctor had directed, wishing to partake of this feast under God's free sky.

The heavens were now darkened, and soon heavy drops began to fall; the wind rose and swept the masses of clouds together. Catharine called the maids and complained to the Doctor, who at this moment entered, that part of their pleasure was destroyed by the rain.

Luther raised his finger warningly: "Not so, dear Catharine, God is giving us the value of many hundred gulden; it is raining corn, oats, barley, cabbage, turnips, grass, milk and many other good things. Let us thank God for them without murmuring. The house is large enough to eat and drink in—Listen, do you not hear wheels? That is Spalatinus; I was afraid he would not come. The others are all here already.

As he spoke a wagon was actually entering the court; and a moment later, Luther was embracing his beloved Spalatinus, heedless of the pouring rain. The other guests now came out of the house and welcomed the new comer: Philip Melancthon, Justus Jonas, Johann Bugenhagen, George Röer, the chaplain of St. Mary's, Caspar Cruziger, professor and castle chaplain at Wittenberg, and Lucas Cranach; also two of Catharine's best friends, the wives of Melancthon and of Jonas, both bearing the same name as herself, so that three Catharines sat down to table.

Dr. Martin's friends saw with pleasure that his mood was so joyous and silently thanked God, for the heavy cloud of melancholy and inward conflict had of late rested darkly upon him. Luther asked with especial interest about the welfare of the elector, who had been sick since February; and the good which Spalatinus brought increased the Doctor's cheerfulness.

After a period of lively conversation Luther rose from his chair, holding a beer glass in his right hand:

"Good friends, hearken! Formerly, Christian men made three crosses at the

name of the Turk and wished him all manner of evil, as an enemy of God and a destroyer of Christianity, but to-day we should thank him and wish him well."

The men smiled; they understood the jest. They owed it to Sultan Suleiman that the emperor and the evangelical princes had agreed upon terms of peace at Schmalkald, and formed an offensive and defensive league. The danger which threatened the German kingdom from the approaching Turkish army had compelled the emperor to swallow the insult to his pride, and yield to the demands of the evangelical princes in order to obtain help from them against foreign foes.

Luther continued: "How every created being is but a tool in the hand of the Creator to the fulfilling of His will; often, indeed, unconsciously. Those who think to do evil do good, and when they strive to overthrow the kingdom of God establish it more firmly. Therefore, we must not weary of trusting, for God has many ways and means, even when our feeble faith believes that all is lost; even the Turk must help the Gospel if the emperor will not. Ah! dear friends! how favorable God has been to us! Everywhere in Germany congregations are to be found who hold the true faith. The structure is fairly completed; it no longer needs building up, but to be enlarged and kept in good repair. A new race has sprung up, and the whole burden no longer rests on me alone, but on many who are pillars of the word, and shining lights in the struggle of light with darkness."

Spalatinus nodded in assent: "Yes, Brother Martin, my eyes have seen with joy the growth of the good cause, and, moreover, the elector has brought good news from Nuremberg. Perhaps this joyful hope has helped to make him better."

"I have drunk a glass to the Turk," said Chaplain Röer, "but a fuller one belongs to the man whose influence accomplished the peace and negotiated the league of Schmalkald, the man who knows how to distinguish between his duty to God and to the emperor better

than Zwingli, whose confusion between the priest and the man has been his destruction. What would we be without the man who——"

Luther, to whom all eyes turned at these words, made a gesture of deprecation and said very earnestly: "Dear Rörer, you know that I do not willingly listen to such words. What I am I am by God's grace—to Him be all the glory."

Meanwhile, Spalatinus turned to Catharine and whispered to her: "The elector has sent a present of a hundred golden gulden to your husband by me. A trifling return, indeed, he calls it, for all the strength and consolation which the presence of Dr. Luther in his sick room afforded, yet he could not refrain from expressing his gratitude as much as lay in his power. I have spoken to you, dear Mistress Luther, rather than to your husband, because I know beforehand that he would refuse the gift; but you, I trust, will receive the money, as this will be a great pleasure to the elector, and you have need of it."

Catharine pressed the hand of the preacher and thanked him softly, adding aloud:

"It is impossible to change the Doctor's determination in this respect. Only

yesterday we almost quarreled about it. A student came to the house, who had just finished his studies, and had no money with which to return home. My husband felt in his pockets, but did not find a single copper, either there or in his money chest. He took up a silver goblet from the shelf and gave it to the student, who refused it at first, while I made the Doctor a signal. He would not see me, but pressed the goblet upon the young man, with the words: 'I need no silver goblets! Take this, friend; carry it to the goldsmith and keep whatever you can get for it!'"

Spalatinus' eyes were dim as he glanced towards Dr. Martin, who was carrying on a lively conversation with those near him, and shaking his head the preacher softly repeated: "That is Luther!"

When the vegetables were eaten, Catharine left her place and brought in the dish of fish. When, in passing it around she reached her husband, he tapped her on the shoulder: "Catharine, you are more proud of your few fish than many a nobleman who has large ponds and catches fish by the score. Ah, pride and ambition often hinder us from rightly using God's creatures. Many a miser lives in luxury, has enough and to spare, and yet cannot rightly enjoy his abundance. It is said: 'The ungodly shall not see the glory of God!'"



IF I WERE A KING!

"If I were a king," said a child, "I would have a castle built that would reach to the clouds."

"And I," said another, "would wear only clothes made of silver and gold."

"And I," said a fat fellow, "would eat nothing but sausage and cakes."

"And I," said a little girl, and she blushed a little, "would take care of all poor children and would give them enough to eat and to wear."

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LUTHER AND HIS SON.

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CATHARINE VON BORA,

*The Wife of Martin Luther.**Translated from the German of Armin Stein, by M. Drisler.*

Melancthon, who, according to his custom, had been sitting quite silent, now looked up and said, turning to Luther:

"What our adversaries would say, if they saw us feasting so merrily here!"

"Let them say what they will," returned Luther. "If we fast, they call us Pharisees and hypocrites! If we feast, they call us gluttons and wine-bibbers! They did the same thing to the Saviour also! But what would our heavenly Father say, because we sit here and enjoy the good things which God has given us? He made all good things that we might use them, and only requires from us that we should acknowledge that all comes from Him, and that we should enjoy them with a thankful spirit."

The conversation continued thus with even greater liveliness for about an hour longer, then Luther called upon his guests to return thanks.

The company then adjourned to the court, and as the rain had cooled and freshened the air, amused themselves with a game at bowls in the alley, which Luther, with Wolfgang's help, had made for his boarders, while the women sat and talked beneath the pear tree.

The friendship of these women was no less warm than that of their husbands, and the wives of Luther and Justus Jonas were especially attached to each other. Rarely, indeed, do we see such entire concord between two women as between these two Catharines. Neither of them knew a joy that she did not share with the other, and each felt the other's sorrows as her own. Often, when Luther's mind was turned to death, and he thought of his wife as a widow, he spoke of Mistress Jonas as a support and refuge, a consoler and adviser. In like manner the friendship of the mothers influenced the children, who often played and studied together.

The women had not sat together long when they heard the joyful tones of Luther's voice, and, looking up, saw a new arrival, Johann Walter, a musician of Torgau, whom they knew Luther held in high esteem. All welcomed him joyfully, though Wolfgang was not pleased at this interruption, and growled to himself: "Why did this fellow come just at this time? Now all the fun will be over, and there will be nothing but tingling and squalling!"

Wolfgang, who might have taken singing lessons from the cows, preferred a game of bowls to the finest music, even when, as to-day, his only part was to set up the pins.

It was not long before his suspicions were verified, as all gathered about the music master and under his leading sang one song after another, first popular airs which Luther liked, and then hymns and chorals which Master Walter had printed at Luther's request, for the use of the evangelical congregations. As their hearts swelled higher, answering to the ardor of vibrating tones, their devotion kindled more and more until their enthusiasm reached its height when Walter began the battle song of the heroes of God:

"A mighty fortress is our God."

The cloister walls re-echoed with the exalting strains, which were carried by the evening breeze into the streets of the town and moved others too, for it was wonderful to see the power which this hero's song exercised over the hearts of those who listened to its majestic strains. Even old Wolfgang could not resist them, he came in and sang, or rather croaked, with the others.

Night came on and after Catharine had prepared supper for them, the guests, Spalatinus and Walter excepted, quitted the house, which, if it had

borne any inscription, should have had this one:

"Behold a house of God among men."

CHAPTER XVIII.—THE MOTHER AND HER CHILDREN.

Wittenberg was but a wretched town in the 16th century. Then houses were for the most part hovels built of wood and clay, and thatched with straw, the streets were crooked and dark, the pavement was only wood, and indeed, in many places there was none at all, so that in stormy weather and when spring brought on a thaw, it was difficult for any one to get about. Only a few imposing houses, some fine churches, the elector's palace, the university and some private dwellings of wealthy burghers gave token that Wittenberg was a town and not a village.

Even the environs of the city had been treated by Dame Nature somewhat shabbily. Luther was fond of repeating,

"Land and yet not land,
Nought but barren sand,"—

for sandy plains stretched away in every direction. Only in the immediate neighborhood towards the east, where flows the broad Elbe, were green trees and copses and vines, and here, sheltered by the forest and watered by the river, were pleasant gardens which made an agreeable retreat for the citizens in the heat of summer.

Not far from the Elster gate was a garden noticeable beyond others for the care and taste with which it had been tended. The rows of hop vines and vegetable beds were tastefully varied by ornamental shrubs and plots bordered with flowers. A little fish pond fed by a living spring sparkled among the whispering reeds, and near by was a white-washed summer house surrounded by a gravel walk, on which children could tumble in safety.

Here, on a beautiful summer day in the year 1534, were gathered a merry band of children who amused themselves by rolling on the sand, leaving off now and then to make an attack on the strawberry beds. The ringleader in these sports was a boy about nine years old,

fresh and blooming, a picture of life and health who, feeling his importance to-day as the eldest and the one whose birthday was the occasion of the festival, ruled over the younger ones accordingly. These were three in number, a pretty, gentle six-year-old girl, and two little boys, aged four and two respectively. This latter was a sturdy round-cheeked youngster, but the elder seemed somewhat frail.

Through the open door of the summer house might be seen the figure of a woman with a child on her lap, who watched the pretty sports of the children with a mother's love, sometimes interposing a word of warning when their high spirits threatened to pass due limits, or when the oldest child exercised his brotherly rights too strongly.

This happy mother is no other than our Catharine. This afternoon when her household work was over she has come to this her favorite place of resort, where under God's free sky, amid the fragrant roses and lilies, with her children playing about her, she may keep the day on which, nine years ago, God gave her the first born son.

Luther could truly say in the words of the Psalmist: "My wife is a fruitful vine, and my children like olive branches around my table." Catharine had borne her husband five living children, all blooming, attractive little creatures, while the mother herself was still as fresh as if pain could never come near her.

Suddenly there was a joyous shriek, "Cousin Lena! Cousin Lena!" and all the children rushed towards the old lady just entering the garden as though she were a fortress to be taken by storm.

All the little ones dearly loved the good cousin, who always had time to spare for them, never tired of answering their questions, never refused their little requests and was always ready to tell them stories in the twilight that almost equaled those of their father. Besides all this, she could also dress dolls for little Lena and make cardboard soldiers that would stand alone for the boys, and more than all, she never betrayed their little faults to the father and the

mother. Yes, indeed, the children all dearly loved good Cousin Lena.

To-day, however, their warm reception was not altogether disinterested; they wanted Cousin Lena to take baby Margaret that the mother might be at leisure to play with them. Their mother was so acceptable a playmate, although she could seldom spare the time to join them in their sports. Perhaps on this account the pleasure was so great, as it rarely happened and always made an especial festival when the mother became a child among her children.

Cousin Lena was a very wise woman. The children did not speak of their wishes but she anticipated them. Then the mother must join in the games, play hide and seek and blind man's buff and count the peas in the pods held up against the sun. The boys laughed merrily when they succeeded better in guessing than their mother, but Lena nestled close to her side and stroked her hand as if to console her for a failure.

So the time passed and it seemed as though the children would never weary of their play. They did not see that large drops of perspiration were rolling down their mother's face, though she continued to exert herself, for this was Hanschen's birthday and the children were all so healthy, and her husband was so well and laboring with such zeal at his great work. All this made her so glad at heart and so strong, that she sported like a child.

At length her strength failed her, and Wolfgang, who just then entered the garden with a basket on his arm, brought a welcome release. He delivered a message from the Doctor that he would probably not be able to come till evening, and then taking from his basket various kinds of dainties, Wolfgang placed them on the table. This brought the children around him like grasshoppers in a wheat field.

Hans, however, seemed to have some particular affair with the good Wolfgang, and as the latter appeared not to understand the wish expressed in beseeching glances, Hans sought a moment when, unperceived, he could whisper to Wolfgang:

"Let us go to the fowling floor."

Wolfgang hesitated to comply with this request; he remembered a lesson which he received not long before, when he took the Doctor a present of a newly-snared chaffinch. The Doctor rebuked him severely, and declared that he took no pleasure in captive birds, which their Creator had not made in order that Herr Wolfgang Sieberger might catch them in snares. But Hans pleaded so earnestly, and, moreover, it was his birthday, and his wishes ought to be gratified.

The pair stole away quietly, but Martin, the four-year-old boy, spied them, and called after them that he wanted to go, too.

Hans was vexed with his little brother, who always wanted "to go, too," and who spoiled all the sport, as he did not understand the matter at all, and could not keep quiet. It needed much coaxing and many promises to quit Martin, and induce him to turn back and let the two culprits go on alone.

Not far from the garden, close by a wood belonging to the University, was a quiet resort where few people came, and here Wolfgang spread his traps, as the feathered songsters abounded there.

At the approach of our two heroes a number of greenfinches flew away, and their song sounded like mocking laughter, as if they despised the great bird catcher, who began to set his snares when it was too late, and might be glad if in the course of a whole fortnight he caught one stupid yellowhammer or a stray little sparrow.

This was the fact; Wolfgang always had bad luck with his traps, though he could never understand how this happened, as he did everything strictly according to rule, and the place was admirably chosen. It seemed as if the good fairies were unfavorable to him, and willfully spoiled his traps.

On this day, although it was Hans' birthday, he had no better luck, and springing up angrily he uttered an imprecation, which the forest eek sent back in a mocking tone.

In a very bad humor the two inters turned back. As they drew near the

garden, Wolfgang stopped suddenly: "The Herr Doctor! Oh, dear, we shall not have a good reception!" and the two culprits moved forward with lingering steps.

Luther had come earlier than he anticipated, and, on asking where Hans was, guessed immediately what the little fellow was doing. At once the Doctor sat down to the table, and filled a whole sheet of paper with writing.

He received the two runaways with a severe look, and did not need to ask where they had been, as their guilty faces betrayed them.

Wolfgang stammered something like an excuse, but Luther interrupted him:

"Sit down, Wolfgang, Hans, and all of you, and listen to the complaint which has been laid before me."

When all were assembled, the Doctor took the paper in his hand, and read as follows:

"To our gracious Dr. Martin Luther, professor and preacher at Wittenberg. We thrushes, blackbirds, linnets, goldfinches, together with other pious, honorable birds who spend their summers at Wittenberg, do you to wit, that according to our knowledge and belief, one Wolfgang Sieberger, your servant, has committed a gross outrage in that, out of hatred to us, having purchased certain old, worn out nets, he has set snares with them, not only for our dear friends the finches, but for all us birds to whom God has given liberty to fly about in the air and live upon the fruits of the earth, so that, although we have not injured him, he seeks to destroy us. Because all this, as you can well imagine, is a great danger and trouble to us poor birds, we here present to you our humble petition, that you would reprove your servant for such conduct, or, if that may not be, that you would let him strew his grain in the evening and would prevent him from visiting the place before 8 o'clock on the next morning; in that case we shall be contented, and even grateful. If he is not willing to do that, but still pursues his designs against our lives, we will entreat God to check him and that he may catch frogs, grasshoppers and snails, instead of little birds, and that at night

he may be overrun with mice, fleas and woodticks, so that he may forget about us and allow us to go free. Why does he not show this great wrath against sparrows, magpies, daws, ravens, mice and rats, which do a great deal of mischief and steal your corn, hay and barley out of the house? We do not do this; we only pick up stray crumbs and grains of corn, and in return we catch a great many flies, gnats and other such insects. We have, therefore, just grounds for our petition that we should not be so hardly treated by Wolfgang, and hope that God will let us escape his old, worn out nets.

Given at our aërial palace among the tree tops, under our customary hand and seal."

Without adding another word, or even looking at the two culprits, Luther folded the paper together and put it into his pocket.

Wolfgang felt like a convicted house-breaker on whom sentence has been passed. He turned red and pale, and would willingly have slipped away if he could have managed it. Hans, too, was sadly cast down; this was a fine birthday!

He waited anxiously till his father should speak to him; a reproof would have seemed like some expiation of his fault; he would even rather have borne a whipping than have seen his father turn from him and begin to talk playfully to the other children, especially Lena, the gentle, obedient daughter. This was hard to bear; there was no worse punishment for Hans, and he recalled with a shiver a time when, as a penalty for some fault, he had been banished for three days from his father's presence. Neither his mother's intercession, nor that of a friend, had been of any avail, and his father's words rang in his ears:

"I would rather have a dead child than a disobedient one. It was not in vain that St. Paul said a bishop should rule his house well and have obedient children, that others, being thereby edified, might take pattern and be not scandalized."

Hans would have wept, but his grief seemed to choke and denied him

the relief of tears. At supper he ate nothing; he could not swallow, and the pleasant chat which his father kept up with the others pierced him like a knife. Lena, too, was very still and ate but little. From time to time she glanced at her unhappy brother; his sorrow was hers as well. Her father had once said to her mother: "If any one would see a living example of the Saviour's words, 'Weep with them that weep, and rejoice with them that do rejoice,' he should look at Lena. She has a tender, sensitive spirit, like an *Æolian* harp, answering to every breath that passes over it."

When supper was over, the little girl pressed closely to her father, stroked his hand and looked up at him with a sweet, but rather a sad smile.

"What would you have, Lena?" asked the father, taking her on his knee.

The child colored prettily as she whispered, "To-day is Hans' birthday;" and two large tears gathered in the beautiful, soft, blue eyes.

Luther was quite overcome by this tender love, and, drawing his daughter to him he kissed her white forehead; then, beckoning to Hans, he said:

"Come, you transgressor, I must yield to your mediator, who has constrained me to take pity on you."

Hans was ready to shout with joy, but restrained himself, and pressing closely to his sister, he whispered to her: "Lena, I will give you my mill."

Luther turned to his wife and cousin Lena, saying: "See now, how powerful an intercessor we have in our Lord, Jesus Christ, to whom our Heavenly Father denies nothing when He pleads for sinners. If my little daughter, Lena, has so constrained me that I cannot resist her, and must lay aside my anger, how much more will Christ, the Lord, through His pleading turn away the wrath of our Heavenly Father, that the sinner may go free. Because I found such comfort when I read in the Holy Scriptures that we are saved, not through our own merits, but solely through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ, I received new life, and my spirit was so moved that I could not refrain from pro-

claiming it to the whole world. How I rejoice and give thanks to God that this great work is ended, and that the German Bible is being circulated in the German land. In the sweat of my brow, and yet with joy and gladness, I have labored at this task, and now the people can search and know God's word, and wherefore the Saviour came into the world. I look on this as the greatest work of my life, and, henceforth, whenever God shall call me, I shall gladly answer: Here am I!"

At this moment the little round cheeked Paul came galloping up on a stick, and rode so hard at his father that he met with a tumble, which made every one laugh. Paul was always so droll. But the father took the little fellow on his knee, saying: "Paul must be a soldier and fight the Turks, then this part of Germany will have peace."

He stroked the boy's curly head, and then, turning to Catharine, said:

"How parents always love the younger children best. That is because Hans and Lena and Martin can go alone and make known their wants; but the little ones cannot do this, yet there is the same love for all.

Catharine held out to him the little six months old Gretchen, saying with playful reproach: "This one needs care most of all, and yet you have not a word for her, Doctor. But that is the way; men do not care for children till they are big; till then, they leave them to the mothers." Laughing at this, Luther took the child, set it on his lap and caressed it. But now the evening began to set in and Catharine spoke of returning, as the physician had forbidden Dr. Luther to stay out of doors after dark. Luther was very reluctant to return to the close, unattractive city, but he yielded to Catharine's entreaties, and with a mischievous smile, he obeyed the housewife's commands, saying: "Catharine, you command me as you will."

CHAPTER XIX.—RAISED FROM THE DEAD.

The snow was falling in large flakes, although the earth had already thickly clothed itself with this soft, white, winter robe. The cold was so bitter that

one could not see through the frosted windows, and the footsteps of the passers-by sounded as though the streets were strewn with bits of glass; nor did any one care to stir abroad, unless urged to do so by necessity.

Mistress Catharine was engaged in packing a traveling bag. Her husband was obliged to take another journey, a longer one this time, yet it was not the thought of the greater distance which made her eyes fill with tears; but when she remembered her husband's weak health and the hardships of the journey, her heart was wrung. She would fain have entreated him to remain at home, if the elector had not so urgently pressed Luther to appear before the evangelical princes at Schmalkald and read the paper which, at the request of the elector, he had prepared to be read before an ecclesiastical council, convened by the Pope at Mantua.

Catharine saw the necessity for this journey, and therefore silently assented to it, but she could not restrain her tears, for her heart throbbed anxiously and would not rest. It was not loneliness that she feared, as Luther left in the house with her, his friend Johannes Agricola, lately removed from Eisleben to Wittenberg and whom, together with his wife, Luther had received into his house till some opening could be found.

It was the dread of the effect of a winter journey on a poor sick man that drove sleep from her eyes, more especially as she saw that it was difficult for him to console her, since Luther himself believed that he would not return home.

It was the first of February, 1537, when Luther got into the carriage sent by the elector, and, well protected by warm wraps, drove out of the Eisleben gate.

Many other inhabitants of Wittenberg beside Catharine sent anxious thoughts after him, and were secretly angry at the elector who demanded from so sick a man such an exertion, which might bring sorrow to all evangelical Christians.

Catharine waited anxiously from day to day and trembled every time a letter came, which happened daily in the house of the evangelical leader. Luther had

to send her news of himself as soon as possible, especially if anything evil happened to him, yet week succeeded week and no letter inscribed in the well known large characters had arrived.

At length the wife's anxious fears subsided, and she began to thank God for a renewed mercy.

On the second of March a messenger rode into the court with a letter in the Doctor's hand. Catharine's fears all returned and her hands trembled so much she could scarcely open the letter. Her presentiment had not deceived her, here were the words telling their tale with frightful clearness.

The letter was dated from Gotha, the 27th of February, and told her that her beloved husband had been very ill and had lain at the point of death, but the prayers and tears of the people had prevailed and the crisis was past. The letter concluded thus:

"I write this to you, because I understand that my gracious lord had commanded the governor to send you to me lest I should die before you saw and spoke with me once more, but now it is not needful that you should come, as God has so abundantly helped me that I hope to come happily to you.

"To-night we sleep at Gotha. I have written four times already; I wonder that no word has reached you."

With trembling hands and streaming eyes Catharine read this letter and then began to complain to Cousin Lena, who was present, that she had been so far from her beloved husband in his sickness. In her sorrow that she had been able to do nothing for the sick man, she quite forgot to thank God for sparing him, and Cousin Lena reminded her of this.

"He wrote four letters which I have not received!" cried Catharine, wringing her hands. "Oh, how he must have longed for his wife and his children when he saw none but strange faces around his sick bed; had none but strange hands to tend him! They meant kindly by him, but friends are not a wife!"

The house could scarcely hold her, she longed for wings that she might hasten to him whom her soul loved.

Cousin Lena's gentle attempt to soothe her excitement seemed almost like a reproach, and yet Catharine's wild words expressed only the foreboding of her anxious spirit, for the hearts of the wedded pair were so linked that each felt the suffering of the other, separated though they might be indeed. Catharine's painful anxiety, which the letter did not soothe, was but too true a presentiment of an access of illness, which again brought her husband to the brink of the grave. It seemed to her as though she saw her husband stretching out his hands to her and heard him calling, "Come, and help me!"

This was true. The sick man lay in Gotha so ill that his life was again despaired of. Dr. Bugenhagen stood by his bedside and administered to him the holy sacrament. Luther's lips spoke words of cheer, though to make himself understood he was obliged to rally his last remnant of physical strength: "I know that I did right when I attacked the Papacy with the word of God, for it was an enemy to God, to Christ, and to the Gospel. Entreat my beloved Philip, Jonas, Cruziger and the others to forgive me whatever wrong I have done them. Exhort my Catharine to take this patiently, since we have had twelve years of happiness together. She has not only been a true wife to me, but she has served like a maid servant; God reward her for it! But you will care for her and the children as well as may be. Our gracious lord, too, the pious elector in Schmalkald, has said to me: 'Have no anxiety; your wife shall be as my wife, and your children as my children.' Greet also from me the deacons of our Church and exhort them in God's name to do hopefully for the Gospel the work which the Holy Spirit puts into their hearts. I leave them no rules. The merciful God will strengthen them and all others to hold fast the pure doctrine, and to give thanks that they are delivered from the anti-Christ. I have commended them to God in fervent prayer, and I trust that He will keep them. I am ready to depart whenever the Lord will, and I hereby resign my soul into the hands of the Father of my

Lord Jesus Christ, whom I have known and preached upon earth."

Thus spoke Luther, the sick man, preparing for death; and weak as the words were, they were heard in Wittenberg by the quick ear of love.

In Catharine's heart anxiety increased more and more, until she could no longer bear to remain quiet at home; she felt that she must go to him; perhaps he would not die if her hands tended him.

She hired a wagon and hastened towards Altenburg, to his dear friend Spalatinus, praying and weeping incessantly. And now the latter comes to meet her with good news: "The Doctor is coming; he has sent to announce his arrival shortly;" and Spalatinus read some verses which Luther had sent him the day before.

"Be of good courage, Mistress Catharine," he went on, "all is well, for Melancthon has added some verses which are written in a playful spirit."

Mistress Catharine had to endure her intense anxiety not much longer, for on the next day she was clasped in the arms of her husband, and cried with him in returning thanks to God.

The Doctor was not yet entirely well, but under such care he must soon recover; and it was a great happiness for Catharine when her husband pressed her hand silently and thanked her with his eyes, as he saw and felt how she busied herself in doing for him with increased zeal those offices which, to her deep sorrow and most unwillingly, she had been obliged for a time to leave to others.

Thus softly wrapped about by his wife's cherishing love, the sick man improved visibly; and when on Maunday Thursday the church bells rang for service, the people of Wittenberg saw the dear, familiar face in the pulpit of the town church, and again heard the word of life from the pale lips of His prophet.

CHAPTER XX.—"LORD" CATHARINE.

Two miles south of Leipsic, on the high road towards Altenburg, in the province of Borna, is a small estate named Zulsdorf, and belonging to the government, which lies very prettily

amid green meadows, waving cornfields and oak woods.

It is very lovely, for there are no workmen's huts on or about it, and when one draws near it gives the impression of being in a state of decay, with its roof full of holes and cracks, gaping open like wounds.

Soon all this will be changed. In the wide court yard three wagons loaded with bricks and lumber have stopped. These were sent by the elector's officers; and carpenters, masons and bricklayers are also at hand, to repair all damages and to restore the little, vine-covered dwelling to its former condition.

A woman's figure was flitting briskly from room to room, making her arrangements with such judgment and skill that the workmen often paused to look after her and whisper: "What a pity that the mistress is not a man!"

Among other things she had ordered beer to be served to the workmen, that they might labor with increased zeal, for soon, she said to herself, her husband would come, and all must be in good order then.

From the house she went to the stable and had a talk with the bailiff, inquiring closely about the condition of the crops; thence, going to the garden, she set her maid servants at work, cheering them on to diligent labor by playful words of encouragement. Near the garden was a swamp overgrown with rushes and creeping plants, in which four men were at work, filling up the marsh with earth, in order to convert it into arable land. Mistress Catharine was glad to see this, and rejoiced to find the work going on so well.

It is easy to see that this is no peasant wife we have before us, but one who is at home here and rules with pleasure like a king. She is somewhat pale and thin as if she had just recovered from an illness, but her eyes sparkle with the happiness of one to whom it is a pleasure to be alive. She is evidently entirely in her element here.

From the orchard, which lies next the kitchen garden, come the joyous sound of children's voices. A girl about twelve years of age came running

forward, crying, "Mother, come! Paul will not come down from the pear tree, though he has twice torn his jacket, and Margaret will not stop eating pears, though she has had enough already."

"Paul is full of mischief," said the mother, following her daughter to the orchard, where the two culprits received their reproof, which they seemed not to take much to heart, as it was not very severe.

"Come in, children," said the mother, "and hear what your father has written to us from Eisenach," and the children followed her into the room, which was already quite habitable.

The reader has no doubt long since guessed that this busy housewife was no other than Mistress Luther, though he may wonder how she came into this neighborhood and into possession of this place.

A cousin of Luther's, to whom Zulsdorf belonged, had been obliged to sell his estate on account of his debts. Luther, urged by Catharine, took pity on his cousin and bought the property for six hundred and ten gulden which the elector lent him.

When Luther brought the deed of sale to his wife, her face lighted up like a child's with pleasure and she thanked him tenderly. This had been her dream, to live on their own property in the country. The cares which she had at first assumed in order to eke out the means of subsistence for their large household had become continually more pleasant to her. Luther was pleased also at the purchase, as he hoped that this quiet place would be a provision for his wife after his death.

At one time it seemed as if God had appointed another place of rest for his Catharine, where the dead sleep so quietly in their silent chambers. Catharine had often watched as nurse beside her husband's sick-bed, but now the tables were turned and Luther knelt by his wife's couch, believing that her last hour had come. The plague, which in 1539 raged so fearfully in Wittenberg, spared Luther's family altogether, but in the February of the following year, Catharine was brought so low through

a miscarriage, that the Doctor gave up all hope and those standing by believed that she was actually dead.

There was but one remedy remaining, but this is more potent than any drugs, and this remedy Luther understood perfectly. On his knees he prayed until the grasp of death relaxed and let his wife go free.

The third of March he wrote to a friend, "My Catharine is wonderfully restored to life, she begins to eat and drink with pleasure, to help herself around the room by means of chairs and tables, and is learning to walk."

Now the thought of buying Zulsdorf seemed to him a suggestion from God. The quiet and pure country air would restore his Catharine, and give her new strength.

Catharine rejoiced at the prospect, but she could not be induced to go away until her husband was obliged to leave Wittenberg, in order to comply with the elector's wish, that he should be present at the convention at Hagenau.

When Luther was gone, Catharine made ready and started for the goal of her desires, taking Lena, Paul and Gretchen with her. Hans and Martin were obliged to remain behind on account of their studies, but were consoled by the promise that on their father's return they too should follow.

Catharine had now been for some weeks in Zulsdorf, and the fresh air and pleasant occupation so strengthened her that she had only good news to send her husband.

Luther's letters too brought joyful tidings. They had already heard that a second mercy had been granted to Luther's prayers, and his beloved Philip Melancthon had been rescued from death. On his way to Hagenau Melancthon was suddenly seized with a dangerous illness and obliged to remain in Weimar. The celebrated physician Sturz, who had treated Luther at Schmalkald stood hopelessly by the bedside when Luther, a true hero of faith and love, entered.

He was greatly shocked at the sight of his friend's dim eyes and sunken

cheeks and exclaimed to his companions: "God save us! how sorely the devil has misused this earthly frame!" Yet terror swayed his heart but a moment—then he turned to the window and prayed more and more distinctly and at last he won from God his petition that his beloved friend might be restored to life.

Soon after this report had reached Zulsdorf, a letter arrived dated July 10, part of which ran thus:

"Master Philip is restored from the grave, and though still pale, is in good spirits, laughs and jokes with us and has a good appetite. Praise God with me for his goodness."

A few days later another letter came from Luther, overflowing with his joyous humor:

"To my gracious Mistress Catharine Luther von Bora and Zulsdorf: You must know that all here are well and in good spirits, eat like Bohemians, but not much; drink like Dutchmen, yet not to excess, and are of good cheer, because his grace of Magdeburg, Bishop Amsdorf is our table companion. It is so hot and dry here, that day and night are alike intolerable. Oh that the last day here were come! Amen.

Your old lover, MARTIN LUTHER."

A third letter announced his speedy arrival and this was the letter the mother read to her children:

"To the wealthy mistress of Zulsdorf, Dame Catharine Luther, my beloved, these: To-morrow morning we leave here. Trouble and pains are thrown away with the diet at Hagenau, but if we accomplished nothing more, at least we have rescued Master Philip from the jaws of hell and we will joyfully bring him back again from the grave by God's grace if it be His will. Amen.

I am not certain whether these letters will find you at Wittenberg or at Zulsdorf, otherwise I would have written more at length. God be with you.

Your lover, MARTIN LUTHER.

Monday after St. James' Day, 1540."

The children shouted with joy when they heard this letter read, but Lena became presently thoughtful and said, drooping her head softly:

"The dear father does not know whether we are here or at Wittenberg and will not know where to go when he returns."

The mother consoled her: "Dear child, your father will be sure to find us, he is so quick to feel what is right."

Three days later the children, who several times each day went up the hill behind the house, saw a cloud of dust on the road through which a wagon soon became visible. "That must be the father!" and the two older children rushed down to meet him without stopping to pick up poor Gretchen, who had tumbled down.

The outcry reached Mistress Catharine and brought her hastily to the door. She saw her beloved husband surrounded by his three children, whom he had lifted into the wagon, and she waved him a welcome with her white handkerchief.

With a childlike pride and joy she led the Doctor, hardly giving him time to brush off the dust of travel, through her new kingdom, for she burned with the desire to show him all her treasures. This exhibition lasted a good while—there was so much to explain and to praise. Luther listened as patiently as a lamb, for Catharine's pleasure was his pleasure too, nor could he conceal his amazement when he said: "Herr Catharine, I see you know how to reign in your new kingdom and I will not refuse to obey your government nor to tender you my most respectful homage. But the Queen pleases me more than the kingdom, since I see that her cheeks are so round and rosy and that she has such good spirits."

Meantime, a meal had been prepared in the sitting room, with every kind of fruit from the garden. Luther now showed his family that he had spoken truly in his letter, when he said he could eat like a Bohemian and drink like a Dutchman. Although, according to his custom, he ate and drank but little, yet that little was heartily enjoyed, and Catharine listened in silent pleasure, while he told the children about his travels.

Suddenly interrupting his story, he

said: "An old Roman heathen, who also had a Zulsdorf without the city, once said of it:

*Ille terrarum mihi praefer omnes
Angulus ridet.*

That is, translated:

Out of all earth most smiles to me that corner. I may, indeed, truly say the same. How good God is, and how often He gives us more than we ask or know. We ask for but a piece of bread, and He gives us a whole loaf. When you were sick, dear Catharine, I implored that He would spare you to me, and, in addition, He has given us Zulsdorf, and sent us a fruitful year. This is a paradise; it warms my very soul. Truly, after the burden and heat of the day God has given me a time of rest, and I will spend it far from Wittenberg in this Zulsdorf. I feel that my strength is failing, and my time of rest draws near, therefore I will put from me all rule, and you shall be my lord, Catharine, whom I will obey like a child."

CHAPTER XXI.—A REMEMBRANCE FOR CATHARINE.

Man proposes, God disposes. The longed-for rest was not appointed here below for this man who had borne more than all the others; there was still much for him to accomplish. Till the end of his life he must labor on, and there were still many weary steps to be taken before the Lord would say to him: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

Yet he was very weary, and his thoughts were continually fixed on death. To all inquiries from friends about his health, he answered always in nearly the same words:

"I am old, and old age is weak and sick and cold and ugly. The pitcher that goes so often to the well must be broken at last. I have lived long enough; God grant me one peaceful hour in which this withered, useless body may be gathered to its fathers. I have seen the best that can happen to me on earth, and I have a feeling that evil times are at hand. God help his own. Amen."

The elector was full of affectionate anxiety, and sent his own physician to Luther. The latter thanked his prince for such thoughtful care for an old, worn out frame, but added:

"I would that our gracious Lord Jesus Christ had taken me away in mercy, for I am of little use upon the earth."

It was not the sick fancy of an old man that made him look so darkly upon the future, but the clear, enlightened prophetic gaze which showed him the evil times at hand. And, indeed, was not the outlook discouraging enough? Political feeling ran very high, and the bond between the Romish and Protestant parties was strained until it seemed on the point of giving way. In Wittenberg itself, that city which was the very light of the gospel, how often morality was outraged. Many a time Luther was obliged to thunder rebukes against the students for their disorderly lives, and against the lawyers for their perversion of justice, so that a saying of his became current: "Lawyers are bad Christians." The response to these protests of a defender of the truth came in the shape of hate and enmity. In the heat of passion men entirely forgot what Christianity owed to Dr. Martin, and dared to load with insults the man before whom they should have stood with uncovered heads. All these things weighed upon his heart and depressed him, so that his thoughts turned willingly to death.

In such a mood he sat at his table one day in the beginning of the year 1543, writing his last will and testament. He was prepared for his departure, and now he wished to set his earthly affairs in order.

This will was of itself a testimonial of honor and gratitude to his wife, as though the failing husband had gathered himself up to express in written words and unalterably, what he had always spoken with loving voice.

The document, which is extant to this day, runs thus:

"I, Dr. Martin Luther, declare in my handwriting that I give to my true and beloved wife, Catharine, as a jointure (if that is the proper term), or for the

term of her natural life, to have and use at her pleasure, in virtue of this document from to-day and henceforward:

First. The property of Zulsdorf, as I bought and improved it and have hitherto held it, without any reservation.

Secondly. The house Bruno, which I bought in the name of my servant Wolfgang, as a dwelling.

Thirdly. All plate and jewelry, as rings, chains, and gold and silver groschen, to the amount of about 1,000 gulden.

I do this for three reasons:

Firstly, because she has always honored and loved me as her true and lawful husband, and has richly blessed me in bearing to me five living children.

Secondly, that she may pay what debts I leave behind me, amounting, as nearly as I can remember, to about 400 gulden; the amount may be a little in excess of this.

Thirdly, and most of all, because I wish that she should rule over the children, and that they should be kept in subjection to her according to God's word, for these are times when the devil, through the agency of wicked tongues, invites even pious children to rebel against control, especially when the mothers are widowed, and the sons have taken wives and the daughters husbands. But I think that a mother is the best guardian for her children, and will use such property to her children's advantage, and not to their injury, seeing that they are her flesh and blood, and that she has borne them beneath her bosom.

And if after my death she should be constrained by poverty or any other cause—I can set no bounds to the working of God's providence—to marry again, I freely express here my trust that she will conduct herself as a mother should towards her children, and will divide all things fairly with them.

And I hereby humbly entreat my just lord, the elector, John Frederick, that he will graciously superintend any such settlements.

And I entreat all my good friends to be witness in behalf of my beloved Catharine if wicked tongues should slan-

der her and accuse her of keeping back any money, as if she wished to defraud her children. I hereby declare that there is no property, except the plate and jewelry above-mentioned; and, certainly, any one can easily make a calculation how much there is, since every one knows how much income I have from my lord, and that I had nothing besides from any one, except some presents, which are included among the jewelry, and some debts which are still owed to me. Also, out of my income I have bought and built so much, and maintained so expensive a household, that I must reckon it as a special blessing that I have been able to keep afloat. The wonder is not that there is no money, but that there are so few debts. I have written thus, because I know that when the devil can no longer approach me he will attack my Catharine in every way, because she has been, and, God be praised, still is my true and faithful wife. This is my most earnest and deliberately expressed feeling.

Given on the Feast of the Epiphany, 1542.

MARTIN LUTHER."

On the same day the Doctor sent for his friends Melancthon, Cruziger and Bugenhagen, that the document might be duly witnessed and thus made valid. Catharine did not see the will at this time, as the Doctor feared to awake in her the sadness which always attended the thought of a separation from her beloved partner.

It seemed to him as if a weight were removed from his spirits after he had fulfilled this duty of a husband and father, and he could now repeat still more fervently in his daily prayers:

"I have a longing to depart and live with Christ."

CHAPTER XXII.—THE GOOD LITTLE LENA.

Through much tribulation we must enter the kingdom of God and whomsoever God loveth, he chasteneth. Martin Luther and his Catharine had already passed through deep waves of anguish and trouble, he as a hero in the field of spiritual conflict, she in the background, feeling through the sympathy of deep

love all that her beloved husband, her second self, endured. Still, purifying and trial were not at an end, for God had decreed that they must pass through the bitterest pain which a parent's heart can know.

As they were sitting together once under the pear tree surrounded by their children, the conversation chanced to turn upon the sacrifice of Isaac. "Dear God," said Luther, "what heart breaking anguish Abraham must have endured before he could bring himself to slay his only well beloved son Isaac. How bitter the journey to Mount Moriah must have been to him, surely he told Sarah nothing of it. I must have contended with God, had he required such a deed of me."

Catharine answered with a deep sigh: "I cannot conceive that God could require anything so terrible of us, as for a man to slay his own child."

This speech recalled Luther to himself and he went on: "Dear Catharine, can you then believe that God suffered his only Son, our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, to die for us? God has nothing in heaven or on earth more precious than his dearly beloved Son, and yet He gave Him to suffer that cruel and shameful death on the cross for us. Would not human judgment say that God was more fatherly, more merciful, more loving to Caiphas, Pilate, Herod and the others than to his own Son? Abraham must have believed in a resurrection of the dead, when he was about to offer up Isaac, concerning whom he had received the promise that through him the Messiah should come. The epistle to the Hebrews shows us this."

Catharine was obliged to own that the Doctor was right, and yet she could not but cast a sorrowful look at her children, while her heart shrank painfully at the thought that God might take one of these from her, though the manner might be less horrible. She drew little Lena, who sat beside her reverently listening, eagerly to her and repeatedly kissed the sweet lips.

In time, however, this conversation was forgotten and the blooming health of the children, rarely interrupted by

even a passing illness, lulled the mother's anxious fears. Yet the Angel of Death had breathed upon the tenderest, loveliest flower of all.

In the September of the year 1542, as Lena sat sewing at her mother's feet, she suddenly became very pale and complained of a severe pain in her chest. The Doctor was quickly sent for and made a careful examination, but could not discover the cause of the sickness. He left a prescription, but only as an experiment. The remedy did not act and the disease progressed with frightful rapidity. The father and mother never left the child's bedside, and each looked at the other, as if for comfort, then in their helplessness turned to Him who alone can save from death, the father with spoken, fervent prayer, the mother with deep silent sighs.

The child suffered much, but lay still and resigned, neither speaking nor complaining. Her suffering could only be guessed by the quivering muscles of the marble face which grew lovelier at the approach of death, as if the pure angelic soul shone through the mortal covering now becoming daily more transparent.

Often when Catharine could not keep back her tears, Lena would turn her face towards her mother, and a half pleading, half soothing glance of the blue eyes said, "Do not weep, dear mother."

Several days had passed thus, when one morning the child raised herself painfully and said to her father: "Dear father, I long greatly to see my brother Hans; I love him so dearly. Will you not send to Torgau and ask Master Crodel to let him interrupt his studies for a few days? Hans is so industrious, he will soon make up the lost time."

Luther lovingly stroked the damp brow and promised Lena what she asked. Two days later Hans arrived. He did not know the reason of this summons, as Luther, in writing to Master Marcus Crodel, with whom Hans was studying, had requested him to say nothing of Lena's dangerous illness. The poor boy was so much the more startled, when on entering the room, he saw his dear sister lying in her bed and looking so greatly changed.

The meeting of the two children was so affecting that Catharine could not remain in the room; it seemed as if her heart would break, and Luther, the strong man, was obliged to turn towards the window to conceal his tears.

Days passed away, and still their hearts were racked by alternate hopes and fears. The mother anxiously watched the face of the physician, but she did not dare to question him, for she dreaded.

Their friends showed great interest; all Wittenberg felt for her and it did her good, yet each new relation of the progress of the sickness was a renewal of pain. For two weeks she had not sought her bed; love, self-forgetting love, had made her so strong; but at length nature demanded her rights; the weary body sank upon a couch and God sent her some hours of oblivion in sleep. He sent her also a beautiful dream; she saw her Magdalen surrounded with bright light, like an angel borne upward, on a rosy cloud, and led away by two beautiful young men, as if to a bridal.

She related this dream to her husband next morning, adding:

"Nothing is impossible with God. I take the dream as a good omen."

Melancthon, who was present, smiled sadly, and said to his friend when Catharine had left the room: "Do you interpret the dream thus, dear Martin? I would not contradict your wife, but I must tell you what this dream means, for I know you have already yielded the dear child to God. The two young men are two angels, who will come and lead the maiden to the true bridegroom."

Luther silently bowed his head and folded his hands on his breast. After a moment he spoke:

"I dearly love and would gladly keep her if our Lord would leave her to me; but if it is Thy will, O God, to take her, I will gladly know that she is with Thee."

When Melancthon was gone, Luther went again to the sick room, and sat down by the bed. The child's ^{new} eyes were already dim, and the skin ^{was} even more

transparent, as though the transfiguration would soon come.

"Magdalen, my little daughter," said the father in a trembling voice, "you would be glad to stay with your father here, and yet would gladly go to your Father above."

Soft and low came the answer from the bed: "Yes, dear father, as God wills."

The mother knelt at the other side, and, hiding her face in her hands, wept aloud; she could not see her child die.

Luther strove to speak to her and to comfort her: "Dear Catharine, think whither she is going. The loveliest of all has been chosen; a beautiful heritage has fallen to her; but at the sight of the dark struggle even his strength failed; he sank on his knees by the bedside and wept bitterly; yet amid his tears he cried again and again to heaven: 'Have pity, O Lord, and end this struggle!'"

An angel of God passed softly through the room, kissed the bride of heaven on the brow, and led her away to the heavenly bridegroom.

* * * *

In a room below, the other children sat closely huddled together, clasping each other's hands and not daring to speak. At last a maid servant came with tear stained face, and told them: "You have no longer any sister Lena."

The children cried out and stretched out their hands to the bearer of such bad news, and looked to her as if she could take back her words; and little Paul stood up, shaking his head and repeating sturdily: "It is not true; she is not dead."

"It is not true; she is not dead;" repeated Gretchen, and started to go to her sister; but her mother came to meet her, and her face told the child that it was true.

How still it was now in the house. The busy hands were idle; all stepped lightly, as though Magdalen were asleep and must not be wakened; nor in Luther's house alone was there mourning; many eyes in Wittenberg wept for Lena.

With a trembling hand the stricken father wrote to his beloved friend, Justus Jonas, who had gone to Halle a year previous as superintendent there:

"Dearest Jonas! You know, I think, that my dearly loved daughter Magdalen is born again into the everlasting kingdom of Christ. My wife and I ought indeed only give thanks and rejoice at so peaceful an end and a return home so blessed, whereby she is raised above the power of the world, the flesh, the Turk and the devil; but the strength of human love is so great that we cannot do this without sobs and sighs, almost to heart breaking, for our pious, obedient daughter who never gave us pain, and who, with her looks, her words, and all her ways in life and in death was nestled too deeply in our hearts for even Christ's death to soothe us as it ought to do. Magdalen was, as you well know, gentle and lovely in character, and beloved by every one. Our Lord Jesus Christ be praised, who has called her, chosen her and glorified her! Oh that such a death, yea, such a life, may be my lot, and that of all whom we love. This is the only grace which I seek from God, author of all consolation and all mercy.

MARTIN LUTHER."

The man of God threw himself on his knees and prayed for strength to perform the last services for the beloved dead. But see! when he entered the chamber of death the mother had already arrayed her child in white, smoothed the soft hair, put a sprig of rosemary in her hand, and now knelt beside her.

How pure and beautiful Magdalen looked, lying there as though death could not have power over her to change her, but must make her glorious, as she would be on the Last Day, when the grave shall give up its prey, and what is sown in corruption shall rise in incorruption.

On the third day Lena was placed in an open coffin, with many flowers about her. On account of the throng of people, the coffin was set under the pear tree. Luther approached and gave her the last kiss: "Dear Lena, how well it is with you! You will rise again and

shine like a star, yea, be bright as the sun. I rejoice in spirit, albeit after the flesh I am very sad. The flesh will not submit; parting is so exceedingly bitter. It is wonderful that we can know so certainly that you are at peace, and yet be sad."

The people pressed around him weeping. Luther thanked them all heartily, saying: "You should rejoice that I have sent a saint, yes, a living saint, to heaven. Would that we might all have such a death; this hour I would gladly die such a death."

"Yes, Doctor," said one of the company; "but every man would rather keep his own."

Luther answered:

"Flesh and blood are flesh and blood! I am glad that she is gone; there is no sadness but after the flesh."

Now Catharine came, led by her friend, Melancthon's wife, to take a last farewell of the beloved child. At this sight, loud weeping broke forth among the people, and Wolfgang, who had come, too, turned away again; he could not endure the sight of the mother's grief.

At length the coffin was closed and borne away to the churchyard, where Lena's last resting place was prepared beside her sister Elizabeth; and once more Wolfgang's trembling hands must force themselves to erect a cross, on which Luther wrote these words:

Here sleep I, Magdalena, Dr. Luther's little daughter, and rest with all the saints in my little bed; I, who was born in sin and must have been forever lost; but now I live and all is well with me, Lord Christ, redeemed with Thy blood."

When Luther returned from the funeral, he said: "My daughter is now well provided for, both in body and soul. We Christians have nothing to complain of; we know that so it must be. We are certainly assured of everlasting life, for God, who gave us His dear Son, cannot lie."

"Ah, you are strong and a man," sighed Catharine; "but a mother cannot so quickly conquer her pain; a woman's heart is weak and timid. God

must have patience with me; I will be still."

"Nay, but weep, dear Catharine," said Luther soothingly, "for this are tears given to us, and our Lord knows how weak we are; He remembers that we are but dust and has compassion upon us; yet His strength will prevail over our weakness. Remember this always; the time is short; soon we shall see each other again and our hearts will rejoice, and this joy no man taketh from us."

Catharine folded her hands and raised her heavy eyes to heaven: "Ah, come quickly, Lord Jesus."

LUTHER AND HIS SON.

The picture on the first page represents Luther in his study. He has been disturbed by the singing of his boy who with his joyous notes has called upon himself an unexpected reproof. For a while he kept quiet, but soon the bird-like spirit sought expression in song again, only this time in a subdued manner. His father noticed the change and said, "This is the way we should walk before our Heavenly Father, rejoicing with fear."

There is a great lack of earnestness in the fighting of some against the world, the flesh and the devil. It would be difficult in some cases to discover any inclination to fight at all.

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PSALM. 122

Ich freue mich wenn man mir sagt: Lasset uns gehn zum Hause des Herrn! Vers. 1.

Der wollen die Stämme hinauf / dein Namen des Herrn zu loben. Thal Vers 4



W. J. R. OERTEL R. F. FINCKE SR

THE HOUSE OF THE LORD.

Zion, thrice happy place,
Adorned with wondrous grace,
And walls of strength embrace thee
round:

In thee our tribes appear,
To pray, and praise, and hear
The sacred gospel's joyful sound.

There David's greater Son
Has fixed His royal throne;
He sits for grace and judgment there;
He bids the saints be glad;
He makes the sinner sad;
And humble souls rejoice with fear.

May peace attend thy gate,
And joy within thee wait,
To bless the soul of every guest:
The man that seeks thy peace,
And wishes thine increase,
A thousand blessings on him rest!

My tongue repeats her vows,
"Peace to this sacred house!"
For there my friends and kindred
dwell;
And since my glorious God
Makes thee His blest abode,
My soul shall ever love thee well.

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CATHARINE VON BORA,

The Wife of Martin Luther.

Translated from the German of Armin Stein, by M. Drisler.

CHAPTER XXIII.—BACK TO ZULSDORF.

Three years had passed away. A second heavy blow followed the loss of Lena, for soon after her death, Mistress Catharine, the wife of Justus Jonas, Catharine's dearest friend, was taken away. Luther had hoped this noble woman would be comfort, support and consolation to his wife when she should be left a widow; and this new sorrow bowed the stricken ones almost to the ground, so that the house of Luther was indeed a house of mourning. Now, however, the wounds had ceased to bleed, and time had softened the bitter anguish to a quiet sorrow.

The stillness and rural peace of Zulsdorf had aided greatly in bringing about this calmer spirit, and the married pair often resorted thither.

This little country seat was so small, and yet to Luther's easily satisfied desires it seemed a paradise, and for Catharine it was a kingdom. With her fondness for building she had often to contend with the dishonesty of the elector's employees, who, in delivering the stipulated amount of building materials, sought to make

their own profit out of the contract; yet the charm of her country life more than compensated her for any unpleasantness of the sort.

To-day we find Catharine in her kingdom, and Gretchen with her. Catharine is busily engaged in adorning the gate with wreaths of flowers, while the daughter is strewing the path with white and yellow sand.

It is a lovely morning in July, nature has put on her most winning beauty, the meadows are sending out their fragrant odors, the birds are singing, the crickets chirping, and all creatures seem full of the pleasure of living.

"Now they may come," cried Catharine to Gretchen, as her eyes strained themselves to catch the first glimpse of an arrival.

But hour after hour passed away, and her longing expectation remained unsatisfied.

It was almost afternoon, and Catharine had gone into the garden to pick gooseberries, when there was a sound of wheels, and directly afterwards a wagon drove into the court, from which Catha-

rine assisted her husband and son to alight.

"God be praised," cried Luther, as soon as the first greeting was over, drawing a deep breath. "God be praised that we are here! I feel like a sailor who has escaped into a safe harbor after the perils of the sea. Heavenly Father, I thank Thee that Thou hast directed me to such a harbor. Thy mercy is with me, even to the end."

The good Doctor was very pale, and he had a saddened, overstrained expression.

When he had been refreshed by a glass of fresh milk and some black bread, he drew his wife down beside him upon the settee of boards roughly put together, which she, by the physician's advice, had had placed in the garden.

"Go away for a little while, children," said he to Hans and Margaret. "I need quiet now."

When the children had gone away hand in hand, Luther took Catharine's right hand and gazed at her so long and earnestly that she became uneasy. "My dear wife," he began at last, "I have much to say to you and a resolution to impart to you, which will astonish you greatly. I remain no longer in Wittenberg; I have bidden farewell to the town in which I have labored for nearly 37 years."

"Doctor!" exclaimed Catharine.

Luther calmed her and went on:

"It has been difficult for me to make this decision, but so it must be. My heart is chilled, so that I may no longer remain in a town where a disorderly way of living prevails more and more, and no one any longer regards my words, and where, while doctors of theology quarrel among themselves, the people fall back into loose and riotous ways, women go about from house to house, maidens dress in an unseemly manner, and the advocates encourage this evil state of affairs by their secret intrigues. I wish, therefore, that you would sell house and land and whatever we possess at Wittenberg, and remain altogether at Zulsdorf while I live, so that I may help you to improve the

property with my pension, which I hope our good elector will not withdraw from me during my lifetime. After my death you will not be able to live in Wittenberg, therefore it would be better to do what behooves to be done while I am still in life. On the journey hither I learned more than I ever could have heard in Wittenberg, so that I am weary of the city, and, God willing, will never return thither. To-morrow I will go to Merseburg to see Prince George of Anhalt, who is now administrator of the bishopric and most faithful in his duty, as not only does he attend diligently to the external affairs of his office, but on Sundays he goes into the pulpit and preaches. I would rather go beg my bread than remain at Wittenberg, to darken and defile my last days with bitter labor in a city so disorderly. No one in the town knows as yet of my resolution, as it was only taken on the way hither; but I will write directly to Master Philip, that he may make it known to the city and to the University."

During this speech, Catharine had drawn nearer to her husband, while her looks grew continually brighter. Now she pressed his hand to her breast: "Dear Doctor, what happiness for me. I have long secretly wished that we might remain here and dwell in peace before God. Yet I fear, amidst my joy, lest you should not be left in quiet—lest you should be dragged back to strife and trouble."

"Fear not, dear wife," said Luther. "God's will be done. And now I will write my letters directly;" and sending for pen, ink and paper, he wrote two letters, which an hour later he sent away by a messenger.

Now followed three tranquil, happy days. The rural quiet had a most soothing effect on Luther's wearied frame. He took much interest in inspecting the improvements which Catharine had made with so much skill in her kingdom, and partook with enjoyment of the fruit gathered by his own hand. He became more cheerful to jest and playfully banter his "Lord Käthe." The honesty and simple confi-

dence of the workmen pleased him, and he often talked with them until, through his friendliness, they lost all fear of the man of whom they knew that he conversed with kings and princes.

Some days later, he felt so refreshed that he cheerfully took his place in the conveyance which Prince George of Merseburg had sent for him, and on August 2nd accompanied the princely administrator to Halle, where the prince was to receive ordination from Luther's hands. Here Luther preached in the cathedral to a large congregation, and then went to Leipsic, where he was eagerly awaited, that men might hear from his lips the true gospel.

When he returned to Zulsdorf he found his Catharine in tears; her presentiment had not deceived. She met her husband with the words:

"Ah, dear Doctor, our happiness is over; yesterday a letter came from the elector, which will tell you all."

Luther glanced at the letter, which expressed both grief and alarm at his resolution to leave Wittenberg. The elector promised solemnly to use all his authority to remove the grounds of Luther's complaint, the justice of which he freely acknowledged, and entreated the fugitive to alter his resolution, as this would entail other evil consequences, Melancthon having declared that he could not remain alone in Wittenberg without his friend Martin Luther, but must leave also.

Luther had scarcely finished the letter before sounds were heard in the court, and going towards the door he met Melancthon and Ambrosius Reuter, burgo-master of Wittenberg, just entering. These two renewed still more urgently the entreaties contained in the elector's letter.

Luther could resist no longer. "God's will be done," he said, and yielded, casting a soothing look towards his wife, who stood at the window with tears in her eyes.

It was like a triumphal procession when, on August 16, Luther, with his wife and oldest son beside him, drove through the Elster gate, seated in a carriage belonging to the councillor, gayly deco-

rated for this occasion with wreaths and flowers. The better disposed among the people welcomed the beloved and honored man, and strict orders were issued with respect to the disorderly elements, both by the University and by the councillor. Luther saw with inward content the change for the better, and willingly sacrificed his own comfort to this end, as indeed throughout his whole life he had ever made it a rule of his thoughts and conduct to forget himself for the sake of the common good.

CHAPTER XXIV.—THE LAST PARTING.

A fierce storm was howling without and drove the snow in thick masses against the window panes. The poor daws took refuge in the crevices in the wall, and if any one of them ventured forth impelled by hunger he was sadly driven about by the wind. Those persons who were compelled to venture into the street wrapped themselves closely in their cloaks and yet could not protect themselves from the bitter cold. It seemed as though old winter, so mild till now, wished to make up for lost time before spring should bid him depart.

Mistress Catharine sat in her room with her youngest child Margaret beside her. She looked pale and weary as though she had spent many nights without sleep, as well she might indeed, for she was anxious about her husband who, summoned by a prince, had again gone out into the world—this poor, sick, old man for whom there could be no rest on earth.

In October and December of the preceding year, at the request of the Counts of Mansfeld, Luther had visited his birth-place, in order to add another jewel to his crown of good works by acting as mediator and peacemaker. Now he had been a third time summoned, and had gone away with a heavy heart, though he made but little sign.

Days of anxiety and apprehension followed upon his departure, and Catharine nowhere found rest. She sought solitude in order that in her thoughts she might have undisturbed intercourse with her dear husband; but solitude oppressed her, and she sought the company of her

child. When, however, she saw her own anxiety reflected in Margaret's face, she longed again for solitude.

Catharine knew indeed that her husband had with him his three sons and their tutor, Ambrosius Rudtfeld; but could these protect him from the inclemency of the winter, and take from him the pains which came upon him before starting? She sighed, she prayed: "Lord, that thou wouldest send the spring for thy servant's sake;" and now behold, spring had come.

The wind had changed, the ice broke up, and the snow disappeared under the soft breath of Italian breezes. Mistress Catharine's heart grew lighter as she breathed the balmy air, a lark singing in the air above her seemed to be like the voice of an angel bringing God's answer to her cry and she murmured, "Thou art God who doest wondrously."

On the next day she could add: "Thou givest us more than we desire." A letter arrived dated from Halle which gladdened her heart when she read it; for here was the old beloved playful style, so now she could indeed rejoice and call Gretchen to hear the letter read:

"To my dearly beloved Mistress Catharine Luther at Wittenberg, these:

Grace and peace in the Lord! Dear Catharine, we arrived to-day at Halle about eight o'clock, but did not go on to Eisleben, as a great Anabaptist met us with floods and blocks of ice, covering the whole country and threatening to re-baptize all. Nor could we retrace our own steps on account of the Mulda, therefore we are obliged to remain quietly at Halle. We do not thirst for water to drink, but take instead good Torgau beer and Rhine wine and refresh ourselves with these in case the Saal should again break forth in anger. Since the ferrymen, as well as ourselves, were timid about returning upon the waters, we would not tempt God, for the devil has a spite against us and dwells in the water, and it is better to shun him than to complain of him, nor is there any need for us to become the sport of the Pope and his armies. I would not have believed that the Saal

could have given us such a reception, spreading over causeways and everywhere. Had you been here, I think you would have advised us to do as we have done, so for once we should have followed your advice. God be with you. Amen.

Given at Halle on the day of the Conversion of St. Paul, 1546.

DR. MARTIN LUTHER."

Catharine was still rejoicing over this letter when a second arrived, dated from Eisleben.

"To my beloved wife, Catharine Luther, Doctor at Zulsdorf, proprietor of the pig-market and whatever else she may be, grace and peace in Christ with my old, poor and (as it seems,) unavailing love.

Dear Catharine, I became very weak on the road to Eisleben for my sins, although if you had been here you would have said it was for the sins of the Jews, as we had to pass through the village close by Eisleben, where many of them live; perhaps they cast a spell upon me and certainly, when I drew near the village a cold wind blew upon my head and pierced through my baretta as though it would turn my brains to ice. This may have helped to bring on vertigo, but now I am quite well.

Your sons went yesterday to Mansfeld, as Hans von Jena invited them so pressing; I do not know what they are doing there. If it were cold they might help me to freeze, but now that it is warm, they must do otherwise as seems good to them. God keep all at home. Greet all friends for me.

February 1, 1546.

MARTIN LUTHER, thy old friend."

Other letters dated on the 6th, 7th and 10th brought good news and lightened Catharine's heart of all anxiety. Luther wrote in a playful tone, thanking "the pious anxious Mistress Catharine Luther, doctress at Zulsdorf and at Wittenberg," for her great care for him which had kept him from sleeping, and tells her since she has been so anxious about him, a fire broke out close by his room door and nearly burned him alive, and a heavy stone falling in his room

narrowly missed crushing him like a mouse in a trap. "I think if you do not cease to be anxious about us, the earth will swallow us, all the elements turn against us and persecute us. Only pray and leave it to God to care for us, for it is written, 'Cast all your care upon him, for he careth for you.'"

The next letter of February 14, what happy news that brought to Luther's home at Wittenberg. "Father is coming! father is coming!" cried Gretchen, throwing herself into her mother's arms.

His work was done, he had reconciled the counts; and already a mess of trout sent by Countess Albert had arrived. Luther's health had likewise improved, and he was held in honor on every side, so that he might well have forgotten a little his home in Wittenberg; yet he was longing for it and hoped within a week to be there.

Father is coming, father is coming! Aye, truly he came, but far otherwise than the hopes and longing wishes of the faithful wife and little daughter pictured.

Why do the church bells ring so sadly throughout the land? Why this bitter weeping in Germany, and why does the elector's messenger stand so timidly and sadly at the door of Luther's house in Wittenberg. Why does he not enter the house and deliver to Mistress Luther the letter which he has brought for her from the elector. Alas! it is breaking his heart that he must say to Mistress Luther that since yesterday she has been a widow and her children fatherless.

A long sad procession was journeying from Eisleben, bringing the man of God who had returned to his native place, only to die there where he was born, and behind the metal coffin was a stream of people weeping, for all felt that they had lost a good, dear father—that they too were orphaned.

Everywhere from the pinnacles of the towers the brazen tongues of the bells called the people to pay their last greeting to the dead, and the peasants in the villages left their work, put on their Sunday garments and came sadly forth to receive the approaching procession; while from the city, priests, councillors, people and school children came to meet

it with chant and funeral psalm, and thus they drew ever nearer to Wittenberg.

The city streets were very still and deserted, for most of the people had gone forth through the gate on the road towards Pratau. Yet the widow sat within her chamber, her hands folded idly in her lap, her eyes red and weary—oh! so weary with weeping. Her spirit is exhausted, she can scarcely collect her thoughts, a merciful numbness has come upon her. Oh, why was she so far from him when he most needed her! If God willed that she should lose her husband, why was the sad sweet privilege denied her of closing the dear one's eyes and of performing for him the last offices of love?

Thus Catharine sat unconscious of what was passing around her, her whole soul being sunk in endless sorrow. Hark! was there not a sound of bells, were not the people crowding the streets?

She started up, pressing both hands upon her forehead as Wolfgang entered, pale and trembling, scarcely restraining his tears as he held out a hand to her, saying: "The Doctor is coming! let us go to meet him!"

Passively Catharine allowed the faithful man to lead her away. She cared nothing for the throng of people, she saw nothing before her but a coffin, and behind the coffin a great number of counts and nobles on horseback, of professors, students and dignitaries and all about her, men, women and children weeping and mourning. She suffered herself to be led to the carriage, which had been appointed to be behind the coffin, and in this she followed her beloved husband whose face she was never more to see upon earth.

The funeral procession entered the church through the door on which, twenty-nine years previously, the hand now cold in death had dealt those mighty blows which re-echoed through all Christendom. Pastor Jonas, who had already made an address in Eisleben beside the coffin, now preached from I. Thess. iv: 13—18, though he could scarcely be heard on account of the weeping and sobbing of the people.

Melancthon pronounced a Latin oration in the name of the University, and then the remains of the Prophet of God were committed to their resting place before the altar of the church.

* * * Catharine beheld all this with tearless eyes—her heart was empty, she could weep no more.

The faithful Melancthon took her hand and led her back to her own house, the silent lonely house. He sought to comfort her; but in the face of such a sorrow, words seemed to him powerless. In the house, children, servants and boarders were waiting for the wife and mother, but when they saw her, their grief broke out afresh.

At the sight of all this weeping and complaining a new trust in God awoke in Catharine's heart, and help from Heaven was given to her; she raised her hands to heaven and with kindling eyes she cried: "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him!"

CHAPTER XXV.—A JUDAS LETTER.

"Widowhood is a desolate state" and "The world is ungrateful." The truth of these homely sayings was abundantly proved by one woman of whom it might have been thought, that for her husband's sake she might be an exception to the common rule. Yet a widow must, like others, "through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God," and remembering these words the question dies upon our lips, "Lord, why hast thou dealt thus with poor Catharine?"

A government officer of high rank came to knock at the door of the chancellor Brück in Wittenberg, and after ceremony he was received within.

Brück was a tall man of fine presence with a keen intellectual face whose high broad forehead gave token of mental power, while his piercing restless eyes showed much keenness of perception, though their peculiar gleam indicated an impetuosity of temperament which warned men to be on their guard. A self-complacent expression, fostered by the consciousness of the elector's favor, played about the mouth and imparted an unpleasant air to the whole countenance.

He saluted the official with a condescending courtesy and with a somewhat formal air inquired his errand.

The officer answered in a deferential manner: "His Electoral Highness sends greetings and begs that the chancellor will give an opinion about the affairs of Dr. Luther's widow, as his Highness, the elector, trusts that the chancellor, having been Luther's friend, will be a protection and assistance to the poor widow."

Brück knitted his thick brows and his eyes grew suspicious, while the white well shaped hand played with a pen taken from the table.

The officer seemed to expect some answer, but as none came he went on: "It must be known to you that the widow has addressed a petition to the elector..."

"A petition!" cried Brück, interrupting the speaker, while his eyes gleamed inquisitively from underneath their covering. "There was some rumor of such a thing, but in this matter the widow has placed no confidence in me, she has sent off this petition secretly. You know its contents?"

"I do," answered the officer, "and the elector sent me to you to hear your opinion of the petition."

"Tell me the drift of it," returned the chancellor, pushing a chair towards the officer and throwing himself into an attitude as though prepared for battle.

"You know," began the other, "that the elector presented to the late Doctor Martin during his life time the sum of 1,000 gulden which the latter enjoyed for some years. Out of pity and as a mark of gratitude to the deceased the elector intends to add another 1,000 gulden to this sum, that the widow may be somewhat relieved in her necessity. Now she petitions the elector to allow the 2000 gulden to be invested to better advantage, in real estate, since a favorable opportunity has just presented itself through the sale of the neighboring estate of Wachsdorf which her late husband desired to purchase and which can be had for 2000 gulden."

The chancellor involuntarily pushed back his chair and his eyes again contracted under the heavy brows. "The petition begins ill," he said harshly.

"Does she dare to approach the elector with a falsehood, pretending that the Doctor desired such a purchase? What management this is! Is not Zulsdorf enough for her to rule over, but she must have a larger domain? If the elector would consent, she would begin to build at Wachsdorf just as she did at Zulsdorf, where she spent so much money foolishly. Besides, Wachsdorf is waste land, which she could turn to no account as every one knows that when the Elbe overflows its banks in spring most of the land is under water."

The officer shook his head doubtfully. "Your pardon, sir, I happen to know Wachsdorf, as I spent much time there in my younger days; but my impressions are not the same as yours and I am of opinion that if the property can be had for 2,000 gulden, that it is being sold far beneath its value as it is fully worth 3,000. Another reason that may incline the widow to this purchase is that she can then keep her children near her."

The chancellor's face grew still more red as he hastily interrupted the officer: "The children, yes, it is in the interest of the children that I oppose this purchase. The boys would rather stay at Wachsdorf and ride and snare birds and idle away their time than sit over their books pursuing their studies, for Mistress Catharine is very weak in managing her boys and can put no check upon them. It would be well if the boys could be taken from her and placed in charge of judicious tutors, as they will never learn anything under their mother's care; but she is obstinate and has already refused my well meant offer to take Hans into my employ, giving as a reason that he is a shy, retiring youth and that the other clerks would simply make sport of him. She is so stiff-necked that it will be difficult for her to find a guardian, every one will dread to contend against such a woman. There is still another point about which I am anxious, lest she, being thus eagerly set on acquiring property for her own advantage, and when, as is likely, she marries again, the children should suffer."

"Oh, for shame!" cried the officer,

interrupting with some excitement, "how can you speak this of the poor widow of whom I hear far different reports?"

An expression half malicious, half angry, passed over the chancellor's face:

"You know the widow only from hearsay, I was well acquainted with her husband and know what she is."

The officer shook his head involuntarily and cleared his throat:

"I trust not only to hearsay, but I read the will which the late Doctor made when it came before the elector for ratification. This will plainly shows that Luther, who best knew his wife, had more confidence in her than you have. It seems to me indeed that the elector has made a mistake in sending to you, for you are not the protector but the accuser of the poor widow. I would rather not undertake the office of transmitting your message to our gracious lord."

The chancellor started up and began pacing the room with long strides, breathing deeply with anger, then stopping suddenly before the officer, he said: "I will spare you the trouble and will write myself."

"I am obliged to you for that," returned the officer, drawing a long breath, "but I must tell you that it is not at all to your credit thus to persecute a poor widow in her affliction. Far better had you remembered the words of the song of Sirach: 'Do not the tears run down the widow's cheeks, and is not her cry against him that causeth them to fall'?"

The chancellor flushed angrily and his hands contracted themselves convulsively as he attempted to speak, but the officer had already quitted the room. Full of excitement he sat down and wrote to the elector a long account of the matter with a pen that was dipped in gall and venom.

Meanwhile the messenger of the elector sat and talked with the widow of the great reformer, willing to ascertain for himself if the evil which the chancellor had spoken of her could possibly be true. Finding Master Philip Melancthon with her, his visit protracted itself for nearly three hours, and by the

heartiness with which his adieux were made to Mistress Catharine, we can judge how favorable his impressions must have been.

Two days later when the counselor was summoned to the elector's presence, he found him at his desk, a long letter in his hand. "I expected you yesterday, my good Veit," began the elector, "that I might learn from your lips the advice of chancellor Brück as regards the petition of the widow of the late Dr. Luther. Meantime, however, I have received this letter, from which I gather that the chancellor desires to express his opinion at some length. This letter has surprised me greatly, as the tone is decidedly hostile to the widow of our dear Doctor, and as he must have known her well from his intimacy with Luther, I feel inclined to credit his word, though I find it difficult, having always pictured the Doctor's wife far different from this."

The counselor came a step nearer: "Will your royal highness permit me to reply?"

"Speak freely, my good Veit," replied the elector, turning a little in order to listen with attention.

The counselor cleared his throat and began:

"No one can deny that the chancellor is a learned and worthy man, yet I parted from him in hot anger, seeing how unjust he could be towards those whom he did not like. He is so strongly prejudiced against the widow Luther and so suspicious of her that I suspected there must be slanderer's work. Therefore I went to see Mistress Catharine, that I might know her personally, and what I learned from her as well as from Melancthon convinced me that the chancellor had listened to false, rather than to true reports. I entreat, therefore, that your royal highness would disbelieve the chancellor's words and would be graciously pleased to grant the poor widow's petition."

The elector cordially grasped the hand of the counselor:

"Thanks, my good Veit; you have done me a good service," then, at a sign, the counselor withdrew.

When the elector was alone he took

up the chancellor's letter and glanced over it again, then raising his eyes to the picture of Luther hanging opposite to him, he cried suddenly:

"No, I will not wear the shame of being reproached by posterity as a promise-breaker! Martin, glorified spirit, I promised you with heart and lips that your wife should be my wife and your children my children, and this promise I will keep. Even though your wife should be unworthy, yet for your sake I would aid her in her poverty, for who could ever adequately recompense you, that benefactor of mankind, the source of blessing and life to all coming generations!"

In Luther's house at Wittenberg, that abode of deep sorrow, sat his widow with her children, thanking God who had visited them in their affliction and had shown them a ray of light in the night of sorrow.

"Thou art the orphan's father and the widow's stay," thus prayed the pale lips.—"Thou hast not forsaken us and hast heard our petition."

Help had come to them from three sources. In the first place, the Elector of Saxony, the generous John Frederic, had not only confirmed Luther's will dated 1542, but had presented the widow with 2000 gulden, which were applied according to her wishes, to the purchase of the Wachsdorf property, to be divided equally among the children. On the next day came a letter from the Counts of Mansfeld, which assured to the widow the sum of 2000 gulden to be paid in instalments of 100 gulden a year, and lastly the King of Denmark, Christian III. sent fifty dollars in specie, promising at the same time that the royal bounty, which Luther, together with two other theologians of Wittenberg, had received from the king, should be continued to his widow.

Catharine felt it a blessing also that she had found such worthy men as guardians for herself and her children; the captain Asmus Spiegel and her own brother, Hans von Bora, were ready to aid the widow in any way, while the care of the children was undertaken by the burgomaster Ambrosius Reuter, the

court physician Melchior Ratzenberger, and Jacob Luther, the brother of the deceased.

In like manner Melancthon and Crugizer offered themselves as guardians to see that the Doctor's children were brought up in the fear of God and in modesty, virtue and wisdom.

Hans, the oldest, now about twenty years of age, who would rather be a student than enter the elector's service, obtained his wish, while the two younger boys, Martin, aged fourteen, and Paul, thirteen, were left with their mother under the care of their faithful and conscientious preceptor Ambrosius Rudtfeld. The eleven years old Gretchen naturally remained with her mother.

Thus was Catharine's trust in God richly rewarded. It behooved her to husband her resources carefully, but not in vain had Catharine twenty years had before her that pattern of a noble frugality, her husband, nor did she now fail to profit by what she had learned.

But it is written: "How wonderful are the thoughts of God and his ways past finding out! Arm then, Catharine, not yet are thy trials at an end, still must thy sorrowing soul be thrice refined by fire.

CHAPTER XXVI.—WAR'S HARDSHIPS.

"After me shall be evil days," thus had the prophet often spoken while still upon the earth, and scarcely were his eyes closed in death before the storm broke loose.

It had long been easy to perceive that the emperor Charles V. only wanted an opportunity to lay waste Luther's vineyard with the sword. In view of this danger of which they were well aware, the evangelical princes and states had united in a league of Schmalkald and this act of self-defense had exasperated the emperor still more. Charles V. was playing a double game, and all his actions showed that Spanish blood flowed in his veins. False alike to Protestants and pope, he sought only to establish his dominion over a country whose language even he did not understand.

When, by his dissimulation, he had gained over the pope to his side, he

sought to obtain help in Germany itself for the war of extermination, which he had resolved upon.

The Roman Catholic Duke of Bavaria came forward, lured by the promise of electoral dignity; for lesser princes a smaller bribe sufficed. Sadder and more shameful was the fact, that even in the camp of the evangelical princes at variance among themselves, the emperor found allies. The Margrave John of Küstrin and Eric duke of Brunswick-Calenberg dared openly to display the imperial standard.

Not satisfied with these conquests, the emperor sought to win over to his side the fiery, powerful and ambitious young duke of Saxony and to this end used every means, and not in vain, to widen the breach between him and his cousin, the elector John Frederick of Saxony.

Maurice, duke of Saxony, betrayed the cause of the gospel for a Judas' reward—the electoral dignity.

When these allies had been gained over, the emperor concealed his purpose no longer, but to the inquiry on the part of the confederates of Schmalkald, what these preparations for war might mean, replied scornfully: that certain rebellious German princes who, under the mask of religion, were attacking the authority of the emperor, were about to be punished with a rod. Under these circumstances it became necessary at once to decide upon some plan of action that the rod destined for their backs might fall upon that of the emperor and thus it was arranged. Quickly a large army was assembled in Upper Germany under the command of the brave general Schärtlin, which, when united with the troops of Saxony and Hesse numbered 27,000 men, and now it would have been an easy matter to fall upon the emperor at Ratibon and take him with 10,000 men as in a trap.

Schärtlin was eager to do this, but an ill-advised respect for the neutrality of the Duke of Bavaria, whose domains the allies believed they ought not to enter, prevented the execution of this plan. This was a great misfortune, for the fruitless delay of the allies gave the emperor time to strengthen his army

and courage to place the elector of Saxony and the landgrave of Hesse under the imperial ban as rebels.

Now the situation became grave.

The two outlaws had joined forces with Schärtlin and were advancing upon the emperor. Although the attack had been greatly delayed, the emperor would have been compelled to succumb if the indecision and sluggishness of the Protestants had not a second time saved him. Not only did they let the winter set in, but they allowed Duke Maurice time to seize upon the electoral domains and to exact homage for himself as the new elector, thus compelling John Frederick to separate himself from Schärtlin in order to regain possession of his own territory.

Schärtlin had no provisions, and could not even construct a fortified camp. The towns lost heart and submitted one after another, so that after the beginning of the year 1547 the emperor was master of the whole of Southern Germany and the Rhine district was lost to the Protestants.

Then came a change.

What mean these shouts and this rejoicing in the Saxon country, and why do the people thus run together? Why this roar of cannon and these standards thus flung to the breeze? Why this wild enthusiasm spreading from village to village, from city to city? He comes, the man outlawed by the emperor and robbed of his sovereign state, but more than ever beloved by his people. Returning to a country fallen under the displeasure of the emperor, the love of the people is his triumphal car, his sword with which to overcome his enemy, his standard under which he goes forth not only to regain his own, but to wrest from his hostile cousin a goodly portion of territory.

The elector John Frederick was then at the height of his power, higher than ever before. The emperor trembled with anxiety and the dread of seeing his disgraceful compact with Duke Maurice exposed before the eyes of all Germany almost deprived him of hope.

He began to despair and had almost lost his self-possession, for there was a

rumor that the Bohemians had gone over to the elector. In this case all hope for the emperor would be over.

Fortunately for him, however, the Bohemians remained strangely passive, neglected to seize their opportunity, and allowed the imperial army to steal behind the elector.

The latter with only nine thousand men lay at Mühlberg on the Elbe, careless of any evil, thinking the destruction of the bridge over the Elbe sufficient protection against surprise.

What, however, did this burning of the bridge avail when treachery showed the enemy a ford? The name of the miller Strauch deserves to be branded to all ages with shame, for he it was who, out of revenge for some horses stolen by the elector's troops, sacrificed his ruler and the future of his ruler's house.

It was a calm and peaceful morning that morning of Sunday, April 24th, 1547, and the pious elector sat in the church at Mühlberg, reverently listening to the reading of the scriptures. Suddenly there came a wild cry, approaching each moment nearer, disturbing the worship. Alas! it was the enemy!

The utmost confusion prevailed, no commands were listened to, no order possible. All fled in disorder towards the heath of Lochau. The stentorian tones of the general succeeded even in flight in rallying a part of the troop and enabled him to cover the retreat with the cavalry, but no valor could withstand the power of the enemy. The elector's army was partly cut down, partly dispersed, and the elector himself valiantly fighting, received a sabre-cut from an Hungarian which laid open his cheek, so that the streaming blood made farther resistance impossible. He surrendered, and a look almost of despair came into his glazed eyes.

At this moment a heavy peal of thunder startled all—a storm at this time of the year was unexpected. A new life spread itself over the features of the elector and with renewed strength in his tone, he cried to heaven: "Ah, Thou ancient, almighty God, Thy voice

tells me Thou still livest, Thou wilt do all for the best."

Scornfully the Hungarian troopers conducted him before the emperor, who received him with a look of mingled anger, pride, scorn and exultation.

The elector, John Frederick of Saxony, was a prisoner of the man who had threatened to exterminate the gospel, root and branch—the electoral dignity was lost to him and to his family forever.

* * * *

In Wittenberg the people hurried hither and thither in the utmost fear and distress—the emperor was coming, he might save himself who could! A rumor preceded him, that the emperor had determined to make the city of the arch-heretic feel the full weight of his anger, that Wittenberg was to be destroyed from the face of the earth, as unworthy to exist in the light of the sun.

The one who most of all, thought it behooved her to fly, was the widow of the arch-heretic. She was scarcely yet again settled in Wittenberg, as in the December of the preceding year she, with many other citizens, had fled to Magdeburg at the approach of Duke Maurice and remained there until the elector hastened to the rescue of the town and recalled the fugitives. Now they must again take refuge in flight and bid hearth and home a last farewell, for with her lord a captive, and the emperor's wrath hanging over her, what hope could there be for Wittenberg?

Their flight was full of difficulty, as in the universal distress each thought but of himself, and it was only after much entreaty that the widow found a peasant willing to take her and her poor children on his wagon.

They drove on with such frantic haste that the poor travelers were almost stunned and still the driver lashed the poor horses, almost exhausted by the rapid pace; yet no time could be allowed them to recover breath.

Four hours passed thus and twilight had already set in. The road now led up a steep hill full of stones, when the horses stopped, utterly exhausted. The driver attempted to urge them to fresh

exertions by repeated blows of the whip, but in vain; one of them uttered a short pitiful cry and fell lifeless to the ground, the blood streaming from his nostrils.

The driver, quite beside himself with rage, uttered reproaches now against the poor animal, now against the emperor and finally against the occupants of the wagon for overloading the horses, till Catharine and her children quitted the vehicle without a word of objection from the driver.

The widow remained with the chest containing the little property she had saved, helpless and without shelter from the night air. What should she do? All around was silent, no human form was to be seen and yonder the clouds were gathering darkly; it would soon be very chilly and they could not possibly spend the night in the open air.

Not long did Catharine remain undecided. She called her sons, made them help her to break the chest open and then, giving each as much as he could carry, she consoled the despairing children: "Let us go on in God's name. We are in his hand everywhere and he will not forsake us."

They moved forward briskly and after half an hour's walking a light gleaming through the darkness gave token of the dwelling of men. Soon they reached a village, and the first house at which they knocked opened to receive them hospitably.

"Merciful heavens! it is Mistress Luther!" cried a voice from the back part of the low room scantily lighted by a pine wood torch, when they were entering.

"Master Philip!" returned Catharine with equal astonishment, and, indeed, that forlorn widow had found her deceased husband's friend, Philip Melancthon.

It happened that a like accident had brought him to this village, his carriage had fallen into a ditch and been upset.

The good peasants, learning from Melancthon's words who the strange woman and her children were, could not do enough to show their respectful love, and brought whatever kitchen and cellar could afford to refresh them.

wearied guests, re-assured them about the means of continuing their journey, and gave up to them for the night their own beds, betaking themselves to straw spread on the barn floor. The guests would fain have prevented this sacrifice, but the good people would not be denied.

On the next morning, when the sun was up, the peasant harnessed his horse and brought the fugitives safely to Magdeburg.

"The court of the lord," said Melancthon, as they drove through the gloomy gateway. "Your late husband often called it this. Who could have thought that we should be forced to fly to it as a refuge from persecution for the gospel's sake. God be praised, that in these dark times we have such a court of the Lord at hand!"

Catharine found in this town a number of people from Wittenberg, and among others the professor of theology, George Major, a dear friend of her husband, to whom she attached herself more closely as Melancthon was obliged to give much of his time to other fugitives and could do less for her.

Here in Magdeburg also, Luther's widow and children were lovingly received and their companion and protector was made welcome also for their sake. A member of the council did all that could be done to make such dear guests forget that they were among strangers and far from home. With a touching friendliness had his wife entreated the widow and her family to make their home with them, saying that there was room enough in the spacious house. No one could tell if a return to Wittenberg would ever be possible, and Catharine yielded to the entreaties urged upon her.

She had scarcely done so, when Professor Major, returning from a brief absence brought the alarming news that the emperor had threatened to place Magdeburg under the ban for harboring the fugitives.

All were paralyzed with fear, those whose hearts had begun to rejoice grew more than ever despondent.

All the next night Catharine lay sleepless. She wrestled with herself

and pleaded with God for light; whither should she go? Where in the wide world might the poor widow of the reformer lay her head?

Early the next morning she went to Professor Major, whom she found quite cast down.

"My dear Professor," said Catharine, taking his hand, "I have decided tonight upon a plan, which I need your assistance to carry out. It is clear beyond a doubt, that we cannot remain in Magdeburg!" Major interrupted her: "God pity us that we must leave this dear town and these kind people! But where can we go?"

"Listen, Professor," continued Catharine. "There is no rest for us in a country ruled by the Emperor Charles, everywhere his vengeance will track us, especially me and my children, therefore I say that we must fly whither his arm cannot reach us!"

"What do you mean, Mistress Luther?" asked the professor with a startled look.

"I am thinking of a long journey," returned Catharine, "but I do not fear it, for the end will repay all trouble. My heart turns to the north where the Gospel has found a secure abiding place under the banner of King Christian. I will fly to the defender of the Gospel faith who was ever friendly and true, and I am sure that he will have pity on Luther's poor widow."

The professor had listened with increasing surprise, and now pressed Catharine's hand joyfully. "Your thought is a good one, dear Mistress Catharine and I wish you a successful journey."

With an embarrassed smile Catharine looked into the professor's face. "There is one thing more necessary to the carrying out of this resolution. As a helpless woman could not make such a long journey alone, I entreat you most urgently to make this sacrifice for me and do me the favor of accompanying me as my guide and protector."

The professor considered a moment, then said very decidedly, "What you desire shall be done, dear Mistress Luther."

On the next morning a white tilted

wagon stopped at the house door; this was to take away the fugitives.

They journeyed as far as Brunswick in safety; there a new hindrance presented itself, the great friendliness of the town-councillors who had heard from Magdeburg who the fugitives were. They sought to dissuade Catharine from her intention to appeal to Denmark for assistance and to re-assure her with the hope of better times; but she adhered to her decision and induced her protector to make a short stay.

A hired wagon conveyed them on their way. From time to time they met one or more foot-soldiers, which always made the professor look grave when he recognized the imperial colors. Catharine too was anxious and urged the driver to hasten that they might reach the town of Gishorn, just visible in the distance.

Yet this did not help them much, for the nearer they approached to the town, the more soldiers they met, and within the city was such a throng of troops and hangers-on of the army, that our travelers could with difficulty make their way.

Still more difficult was it to find any shelter, and Catharine saw with an anxious heart the professor's unceasing efforts to do what he had undertaken for her sake. It seemed to her as though the end of the journey which at first seemed so near were now removed to an unattainable distance, and after a little struggle with herself she had already relinquished her hopes, when, on the evening on this day, she said to the professor: "I cannot bear to see the trouble and labor which you have undertaken on my behalf. Let us turn back, for the danger increases, and it seems impossible to reach Denmark!"

The professor nodded thoughtfully: "What I do is done willingly and for God's sake, yet I see that it is willed that we should turn back."

The next morning they began their return without knowing whither they should bend their steps, or where they could stay.

At noon they stopped at a little inn to take some food. In the dining-room,

partaking of a simple repast of black bread and cheese, sat an elderly man, who might be easily recognized as a commercial agent.

The usual greetings and questions: "Where do you come from? Where are you going?" were exchanged, and it was soon understood that the traveller came from Torgau and could give them tidings of the fate of Wittenberg.

"Contrary to all expectation," he began: "A rumor preceded the emperor that the city of ^{the} arch-heretic was about to feel the full weight of his displeasure, but he dealt most mercifully and in a right royal manner with it. Truly, he would have been a knave if he had done otherwise, for even an emperor should keep his word."

"What do you mean by that?" inquired the professor.

"Do you happen to know Lucas Cranach, the court painter?" inquired the traveller.

"How should we not know him?" cried the professor and Mistress Luther together.

"Well then, this man saved the town. He went boldly through the emperor's camp, straight to the royal court, and making his way through his attendants, approached the emperor humbly, yet with a certain courageous trust and reminded him of the promise once given by himself to the painter. I do not know what this promise may have been, but the result was that the emperor dealt very gently with Wittenberg."

"Oh! I understand," cried Master quickly. "Cranach told me once, how, many years ago, he met the present emperor Charles V., who was then but a lad. If I am not mistaken, Cranach was sent by Frederick the Wise, at that time prince of Saxony, as ambassador to Mecheln in the Netherlands, where the emperor Maximilian had his court. This was an opportunity which the emperor did not let slip, but availed himself of the skill of the celebrated painter to have his portrait painted. The young Prince Charles, who was already destined for the German throne, wished to be painted, also earnestly requested Cranach to do this promising to keep



THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH OF CHRIST.
NINETEENTH STREET, NEAR FIRST AVENUE.

very still. The restless lad did not keep his promise very strictly, but gave the painter a good deal of trouble. Nevertheless the portrait was such a success, that in his childish delight the prince exclaimed, pressing the painter's hand: 'Master Lucas, when I am a prince like my uncle and you have any wish at heart, ask, and you shall have it. There is my hand upon it!' This is the story as Cranach told it to me. Ah well, many years have slipped away, and now the day has come to remind the prince of his royal word. Noble Cranach, you asked nothing for yourself, but only for others! How like him, who counted you among his best friends, the blessed Dr. Martin!"

Deeply moved, the traveller brushed a tear from his eye and said, "He must be a noble and great man who thus forgets himself for the sake of his native city, and, indeed, that is not all that he did. I heard further that the emperor re-

ceived him most graciously and made very flattering offers if he would enter the imperial service as court painter, but Cranach refused all these offers with many thanks, asking something instead, namely that the emperor would deal mercifully with the captive Prince John Frederick and allow that Cranach should share the captivity of his unhappy master, who had bestowed much kindness upon him, in return for which he would fain employ the resources of art to beguile the sadness of imprisonment.

Catharine had listened with tearful eyes, and the professor also was deeply moved. A long silence followed the story of the traveller, until Catharine, turning towards him said, "The town has been spared, but one anxiety still weighs upon my soul; what fate befell the remains of my beloved" — ? She could say no more, she looked anxiously into the face of the traveller.

"Do not trouble yourself, Mistress Luther," said the man consoling her. "Duke Alva, indeed, that man with face like parchment and a heart of stone, vehemently urged the emperor to scatter the remains of the arch-heretic to the four winds of heaven, but the emperor answered sternly: 'I war with living, not with dead men!' and even forbade his soldiers to disturb the Lutheran service, so that Bugenhagen preached the evangelical faith in the presence of Spanish soldiers without any disturbance.

Catharine drew a long breath and warmly pressed the hands of the messenger who brought her such good tidings.

Three days later, a woman and her four children were kneeling in prayer beside the grave of Luther and weeping as they prayed.

This was the first place to which Catharine turned her steps on entering the city gate, and only after being thus assured that the holiest spot on earth to her was unprofaned did she seek her dwelling in the old Augustinian cloister.

There, indeed, a sad sight awaited her. The emperor's prohibition had not extended to Luther's home, and thus the place which had sheltered the arch-heretic had been made the scene of riotous devastation by the foreign soldiery. The furniture was for the most part entirely destroyed, the cellars had been emptied of their stores and the walls were scribbled with mocking phrases.

The children broke out into lamentations, but Catharine was quite still, and with firmly closed lips she set about the task of building a new home from the ruins of the old.

OUR CHURCH.

On the 111th page we present a picture of the church which has recently been secured for our congregation. For more than fifteen years we have labored here among the masses of the East side until it seemed as if our hopes of successfully establishing a German-English church for the people were doomed to disappointment. But, at last, the way

was opened, and we have now obtained a large and beautiful edifice in every way adapted to the wants of our people. The first services in connection with the mission were held in an old blacksmith shop, in Fourteenth Street, in November, 1866. The audience consisted of four women and nineteen children. In 1869 we organized a church with sixty-five members. The services of the congregation and schools have been held since then in various churches and halls. We lived as it were in tents and had no continuing city. The growth of the congregation was thus impeded by many difficulties.

We now number about six hundred members, the majority of whom are young people, who have been confirmed in the church during the last ten years.

The property was bought for \$20,000, about half of which has been secured. The rest will have to be paid by the coming generation of worshippers. The editor of the SUNDAY GUEST has been the only pastor of this Congregation, and during thirteen years of pastoral labor he has baptized 2161 persons, married 1639 couples, confirmed 850 catechumens, and conducted 734 funerals.

The great mass of the tenement house population of New York is practically unreached by the Gospel. There is a wide field open to the work of the Church, and it is already white unto the harvest.

A RARE OCCURRENCE. On the 1st of May was baptized Florence Catharine Wohlfert, a young lady who can look up to four generations of living ancestors. Her mother, grandfather, grandmother and great-grandfather are still living and enjoying good health. This surpasses the record of the family of Germany whose youngest member is the son of the emperor's grandson.

THE SUNDAY GUEST.

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